

THE GENIUS:
OR, THE
MYSTERIOUS
ADVENTURES
OF DON...

Carl Grosse





T H E

G E N I U S, &c.

THE
G E N I U S:
OR,
THE MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES
OF
DON CARLOS DE GRANDEZ.
BY THE MARQUIS VON GROSSE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

By JOSEPH TRAPP,
TRANSLATOR OF STOEVER'S LIFE OF LINNÆUS,
PICTURE OF ITALY, &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

“ ——Come, feeling night,
“ Skarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
“ And with thy bloody and invisible hand
“ Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond
“ Which keeps me pale—Light thickens; and the crow
“ Makes wing to the rooky wood:
“ Good things by day begin to droop and drouse;
“ While night's black agents to their preys do rouse.

“ SHAKESPEARE.”

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THE
G E N I U S.

C H A P. I.

I AM descended from an ancient Spanish family, that traces its ancestors among the first Christians, and produced several heroes in the earliest ages of our monarchy. Don Juan de Grandez, my father, was a grandee of the first class, and the whole lineage of my mother always boasted of an equal share of wealth and respectability. Alcantara is my native place; I was bred for the honourable profession of arms, and served as a volunteer under the Duc De Crillon at the famous

siege of Gibraltar, when the gallant Veteran Elliot defeated the combined forces of France and Spain, and gathered immortal laurels by forcing us to make a sudden and disgraceful retreat. I was then in my twenty-third year, and so disgusted at the pursuit of martial glory, that I bade adieu to the army for ever.

Though inglorious in point of martial fame, still the eventful course of my past career has certain trophies to show, which, gathered as they are in the myrtle-groves of love, or in the wild mazes of romantic adventure, will appear full as memorable and interesting to some, as the gigantic feats of many a huge cut-throat, champion, or conqueror. The whole of my education seems to have been purposely planned to render me conspicuous in the sphere of gallantry ; and my quitting the banners of Mars at the age of twenty-three, may justly be considered as the effect of that system of juvenile breeding.

The amiable qualities and accomplishments of my mother had a striking influence on my own improvement, and on the manner of acquiring the agreeable talents of a young man
of



of fashion. Her beauty stood confessed the transcendent inheritance of her offspring. I was indeed remarkable, for a pair of full cheeks, flushed with rosy health, a delicate and significant mouth, two large blue eyes, sparkling with sentimental fire, and overshadowed by copious and symmetrical black brows. A vivacity of action, a smooth and flattering tongue, an invariable evenness of temper, and a lofty deportment which I occasionally assumed, contributed to procure me notice, indulgence, and favor.

At the eve of manhood, I felt myself gifted with such a store of warmth and sensibility, as seldom fails of making an impression, especially on the fair sex.

I was excessively fond of caressing the ladies ; but merely prompted by caprice, and still more by the fashionable levities of the day, I generally reserved my homage for her that was the most admired. But soon the hour came, when I was to expiate whole years for the petulance and wantonness of youth.

Elmira, Countess Dacosta, had spent the first fifteen years of her life, with a relation in

an old castle, too remote from the gay cities to attract the crowds of my gallant contemporaries. Shortly after my return from the fruitless expedition against Gibraltar, she came to Alcantara, decked out with all the charms of novelty, but at the same time with such fascinating endowments, as soon raised her above the splendor, and even the jealousy of every other female competitor. Beauty blended with kindness, wit heightened by the most endearing sprightliness, a heart glowing with sympathy, and challenging an eternal love—such were Elmira's enviable qualities. Nature seemed to have formed her at the most auspicious epoch, for each expression of her sentiments, the slightest motion of her body, bore the stamp of unrivalled gracefulness and matchless perfection. She received my addresses with that flattering candor, which doubles every pace, but keeps a lover confined, as it were, within the boundary from which he first started.

One evening I found her alone, sitting on a sopha, with a guitar on her lap: one hand supported her head, the other was negligently hanging

hanging down over her handkerchief. Having entered the apartment unperceived, and her back being turned towards me, I heard her sob, and saw some tears trickle down upon the music-book before her. I drew nearer, and was not heard. I knelt at her feet, laid hold of the unoccupied hand, kissed it, but she seemed as motionless as a statue. At last she startled, and seeing me by her side, attempted to rise in haste, but I kept her, still silent, on her seat.

"Ah, Carlos," cried she, "what have you seen?—Why, this arietta is so moving, so inexpressibly moving—have you never heard it? I'll play it again if you chuse."

She now turned over the leaves of the notes; but I soon saw, the arietta was nowhere to be found. She endeavoured, at least, to recover her usual sprightliness; but this was as inattainable as the moving song.

"Madam," began I, "we cannot always find what we look for—my own experience for that. I came hither quite depressed, and thought to find you in high spirits; but I meet only tears and reserve!"

" Reserve, Don Carlos ? How can that be?"

" Exactly as I told you. I am young in years, Elmira, but I have ceased to be young in love. If adoring you, does not entitle me to your confidence, will you deny it to my friendship?—You are mute? You weep? O speak to me—Carlos is wholly yours!"

" Do you fancy, Sir," replied she somewhat offended, " that I have secrets to discover to you? I assure you, I am not at all prepared for it."

" Elmira, you misunderstand me—I did not mean to offend you."

" I believe you—all you wanted was a little more ingenuity to mask your curiosity."

" I confess my intrusion, and crave your pardon. Let us drop the subject—pray what master made this guitar?"

At these words she stared wildly—tears again bedewed her lovely cheeks—and her swelling bosom heaved a long alas!

" I plainly see," continued I, " my presence is too much for you. Your forgiveness, Madonna—adieu!"

" Stay,

"Stay, Carlos," exclaimed she; "abide with me."

"Since I cannot be the object of your pity," concluded I, "let me avoid being that of your indignation."

Thus saying, I retired in a pet, but it was only the pet of a lover, that deems himself slighted. I fretted myself into an indisposition, which had already obliged me two days to keep my room. In the evening of the third, I was surprised with the following billet:

"WE have exchanged parts. I am on the eve of becoming the *object* of *your* pity. You love all women; and I—alas!—but *one man*. Tomorrow morning I go to confess in the convent of the Capachins at St. Jago."

"ELMIRA."

C H A P. II.

ST. JAGO lies at the distance of four good leagues from Alcantara. It was necessary for me to set out the same night, and notwithstanding a terrible storm, and the remonstrances of my trusty servant Alfonso, I mounted on horseback, and galloped out of the city gates. Alfonso had prophesied true; the rain, mixed with thunder and lightning, burst in clouds from the sky, and soaked us to the skin; the wind which blew a hurricane, threw us several times from our horses, and no path was cognizable to our sight;—the poor animals, sunk at every pace deeper in the bogs; at last we neither knew the situation of the convent, nor the direction of the town, and in the most imminent peril of being drowned or choked in the moors, reached the borders of a forest.—Here new terrors overwhelmed us. To lessen the fright I began to sing a song, and Alfonso joined me by way of chorus. Suddenly the bushes seemed

feemed to be animated with a hundred voices, which I took for the echo of the woodlands ; but what was my astonishment, when I heard the second verse begun, before we had done with the first. " What can this be ? " cried I to Alfonso. " Ah ! my Lord," answered the poor fellow trembling ; " I'm sure this wood is haunted by a thousand devils that want to break our necks."

I now descried a beaten road before us. Impelled by an agony of fear, I so violently spurred my horse, that he run off in full spread, while poor Alfonso, entangled in the bushes, cried after, without being able to overtake me. In less than a minute I got so far as to hear nothing more, and having constantly tried to check the rapid course of my horse, he strayed from the road into a thick covert. The sky had cleared up, and still my situation was comfortless. A thousand times I called Alfonso, but nobody answered. While looking out for a path, I perceived several lights, at a distance, whitch like mephitic fires, disappeared gradually ; there was one, however, whose gleam ap-

peared fixed and stationary, and traversing several marshes, up to my knees in the mire, I, at last, discovered a little hovel, in a thicket, from which the rays proceeded. I approached the entrance and gave a loud rap, when a soft voice called out from within : “ Lay down the things, Maria, and open the door.” The door was opened by a little girl ; a woman turned her back to me, busied with stirring a coal-fire, and a little boy seeing me, hid his face in her bosom, crying : “ Ah, mother ! only look !”

“ I’m glad thou’rt come Jago,” said the woman without turning an eye from the fire, and the kettle that was put over it. “ I wish you had brought father too. I have been obliged to burn all the fuel, waiting so long, but I warrant you, my dear, you’ll relish the soup the better.”

She now took the cover off the kettle, and looked into it with all the solicitude of a busy and pleased housewife.

“ Dear woman,” cried I at last, “ that was a terrible storm—”

“ Aye,”

"Aye," interrupted she, "and the lightning as bad—I dare say, poor soul, thou'lt got wet through—"

At these words she cast her eyes towards the door, and seeing me with my horse which had half entered the cot, she startled, the cover dropt from her hands, the kettle over-set, and the nicest of soups ran spuming into the fire, which it totally extinguished. But for the pale glimpse of a small lamp, that hung at the window, we should have been in complete darkness. She now recovered from her surprize, rose and advanced towards me.

—"Excuse me, good woman," pursued I,
"I have lost my way—"

"—Never mind, Sir," returned she in a friendly tone, "you are welcome in-doors, but your horse may as well keep without."

I made no reply, went out, fastened the animal to a tree, and returned to the hovel.

—"I am afraid, Sir," resumed she, "you are both wet and hungry: I would instantly light a fire, if I could but procure dry wood."

"Since

—“ Since mine is the fault,” answered I, “ that the kettle overset ; it is but justice, that mine should be the punishment to procure wood.”

So saying, I ran out and got deep among the bushes in search of what I wanted. I heard my horse neigh, which was always the case when any body meddled with him. A loud and conjoint laugh of several voices ensued, from which I inferred Jago’s return. In about half an hour, I had gathered with great difficulty a bundle of wood and hastening back to the cot, found Jago, with his wife sitting on his knees. The lamp, which stood on the ground before the hearth, cast its full radiance into her beautiful face, whose charms I had not till now been able to discover. The little children thronged around them. I stood quite enraptured at this scene of rural felicity.—“ O God !” exclaimed Jago in a pensive mood, when the little boy interrupted him by calling out : “ Here’s the stranger !”

Jago now gently raised his fair burden, rose; and shaking me by the hand : “ You are

are heartily welcome," said he, " we have no convenience here, but you are seen with pleasure."

I made some apologies, but they were waved; the charming woman lighted the fire, another messe was soon prepared, and while the blazing flames of the hospitable hearth dried our clothes, we began a serious conversation, in the course of which I soon perceived that the knowledge and cultivation of my hosts were of a much superior kind to the humble sphere in which they then moved.

At last, I seized her hand: " pardon my indiscretion, charming woman," said I, " how came you to this hovel, how came you to quit a world that would adore you?"

— " Adore ?" returned she, smiling; " how do you know, Sennor, but this is the very reason that made me quit it ?"

— " Our history," interrupted Jago, " is very long, and very dismal. You are sensible, Sennor, that here is our last refuge; we have devoted part of our life to the world, but

the



the fairest portion of it, we reserve for our happiness."

—“ Shall I,” said Jago, “ communicate part of our story to this gentlemen ? ”—She nodded assent, played with her children, stole at times, unperceived, out of the cot, and seemed only to take a distant interest in the account.

“ —We are both of a noble origin,” continued Jago; “ but you’ll permit me, Senor, to conceal the names of our families. My youth had nothing interesting in it ; being the fifth and youngest son, and no great provision of course made for me, to support the character of a nobleman, my parents resolved to consecrate me to the service of the church. But my inclination was for the army, and fortune favored my wishes. I rose from a cadet to the rank of lieutenant ; and a rebellion in New Spain demanding some forces to quell it, my regiment was ordered to march to Cadiz to embark for foreign service, and I obtained the command of a company. Meanwhile the *avisos*, destined to facilitate the arrival of the galleons, being detained by contrary

contrary winds, and by the roguishness of the contractors; we had no chance of putting to sea, till some months afterwards, which interval became the most memorable time of my life. Cadiz being a place mostly inhabited by merchants, and the military but little respected at that time; it was difficult to get introduced into any good family. My intercourse was, therefore, limited to the officers of my regiment, and having little else to do than to walk about, the harbor became almost the constant place of my excursions. I found afterwards a more pleasant walk on the north-east side of Fort St. Sebastian, where I frequently sat musing at the lighthouse, surveying the wide surface of the ocean, and dreaming of future wealth and happiness. My reveries were seldom disturbed by the devotees, who came to sacrifice in the adjacent chapel of St. Sebastian.

" Soon after happened the famous occurrence of a ship from St. Maloes, attempting to export silver without paying the customary duties. It was resolved to seize her, and confiscate the cargo. Two armed galiots began

the

the attack, when the Maloese captain refusing to strike, not only defended himself, but attempted to take one of the galiots. The combat was obstinate, and the Frenchman, being dismasted and driven on shore, after having rendered the two galiots unfit for farther pursuit, seeing two others heave in sight, set fire to his magazine and blew up the ship.

" Only twelve people were driven on shore half-dead upon some pieces of the wreck, and instead of giving them proper assistance, the custom-house officers tore the very clothes off their backs. Being near the spot, I went to check the plundering banditti, and, sword in hand, rescued from their rapacious clutches a well-drest young man, whom I carried almost lifeless to a neighboring inn, where I gave orders for care to be taken of him.

" When I went to see him the next morning, I found he had disappeared. Accustomed to ingratitude, I pulled out my purse to pay a long bill of expences which the landlord presented to me, and proud of having done

done a humane and charitable action, resumed my favorite walk. The great number of strangers I saw there, afforded me a very agreeable pastime; but the figure and deportment of a man, muffled up in a large cloak, with his hat slouched over one half of his face, chiefly engrossed my notice. He daily came to the chapel, was very short in his devotion, and each time stopt a few minutes before the gate to read an ancient inscription, then hung his head in a melancholy pause, hid himself deeper in his cloak, and suddenly went away. His frequent visiting the chapel, and his whole air and demeanor, became equally striking to the rest of the devotees. Whole crowds of people, at last, came from the city, stared at the mystic inscription on the church-wall; and the stranger soon found its avenues quite inaccessible on his arrival, while the gaping multitude, pointed with their fingers at him, and called out so loudly, '*Bebold the Sorcerer!*' that I really thought he would not have returned again.

" But he never missed a day, and if he could get near the stone, always fixed his eyes

eyes on it, for a moment. When the clamors of the people grew too loud, he would open his cloak, and measure the whole crowd with a gloomy stare. An involuntary horror then seemed to seize them all, and their courage and sauciness never revived till he was gone.

" I generally stood in the midst of the gaping populace and often found his regards so significantly fixed on me, that I could not help feeling an inward emotion of awful reverence.

" One evening in the dusk, I happened to be alone with him on the square before the chapel, when he surveyed me with great astonishment, and finding nobody near, thus civilly addressed me :

" Your appearance, Sennor, bespeaks a man of honor and courage ; may I trust such appearance ? "

— " To be sure, Sennor, you safely may."

— " Then may I request you," continued he, " to be here between midnight and one in the morning ? "

— " If I knew, Sennor—"

— " You

—“ You shall know all,” interrupted he, eagerly. I wish for an undisturbed conversation with you. It will be a moonlight night, and I, Sennor,—am an honest man.”

Here he opened his cloak and his fair and large eyes attested the sincerity of his declaration.

—“ You may depend on my coming, said I ; I am no dastard, and in case of an attack, know how to defend myself.”

“ He now bowed, wrapt himself up in his wonted manner, and retired.

“ When the first stroke of the chapel-bell proclaimed midnight, I was on the appointed spot. The moon frequently hid herself behind the passing clouds, and cast a solemn glimpse on the surrounding objects. The brisk gales from the sea-side clattered among the panes of the sacred pile, the weather-cocks and the flagstaff of the fort creaked on their holds, and the sea-surf dashed with roaring violence against the ramparts. I walked up and down well-armed, and wrapt up in a cloak. At first, curiosity had been my principal sensation, and my fancy roved through

through a maze of probabilities to solve the questions, with which I had already for several weeks tormented myself. But the stranger staying away longer than he had promised, and the clock striking one without any more prospect of his coming, I began to grow fearful : the rattling of the half-mouldered crosses on the graves of the departed dead; the rustling of every leaf now made my hair stand an end. On the point of going away with impatience, the long expected stranger advanced on the church-yard-path. "Pardon me," cried he, "for having made you wait so long." He then took me by the hand, and led me to the chapel-gate. "Time is short," resumed he, "I have but little to tell you. A few years ago, I happened to get acquainted with a very singular man at Alcantara, who disappeared soon after from the inn in which we both lodged. In his haste, he left behind him a pocket book, which was brought to me, containing a number of letters partly unintelligible, partly insignificant in their purport. It also contained the key of an alphabet, by which I have lately

lately been enabled to decipher those writings, besides the inscription on this wall. It has, perhaps, been hitherto considered as the remains of some ancient funeral monument, and on this account put up here; but by my key, this is its real meaning: *Stranger and initiated companion! The friends are near. A forest, and a cavern not far from Alcantara. The first day of the month.*"

" At these words, the stranger eyed me with an expressive glance, asking: " what say you to this, Sennor ? "

— " I don't know," answered I; " the inscription is as obscure to me as before. What are we to do with it ? "

— " What," cried he with indignation, " can you ask still ? Much has your appearance deceived me. I advise you quickly to be gone, or you shall feel the keenness of my sword ? "

— " Your sword shall not frighten me," returned I laughing: " But why so hot ? It is impossible you should be more curious than I am to unravel the secret, I only meant to ask your counsel in the matter."

" This

" This seemed to appease him a little.—" Certainly, what shall we do!" repeated he with a deep sigh. " We are only in the middle of the month, and must quietly wait the beginning of the next. Will you then go with me ?"

" I informed him, that I would ask leave, if the galiots which were to carry me with the regiment to which I belonged to Mexico, did not sail before."

—“ Good God !” exclaimed he, “ I could never have thought it ; I would not have told you a syllable. But I hope, you will keep secrefy. I like you from my heart, without knowing why ; I offer you my friendship. Don’t wave it, for I may sometime be useful to you.”

—“ I accept it with thanks, Sennor.”

—“ Then don’t ask leave ; it would create suspicion. I’ll go by myself. And if I return, and find you here, you shall know all. If you are gone, the mystery will be kept from you till some other day.”

“ He now embraced me cordially, withdrew, and I followed him soon after.

“ A few

“ A few days subsequent to this adventure, we received sailing orders. After a long and tedious passage we arrived at Mexico ; the disturbances were soon quelled, and the next year, I obtained leave to visit my family in Old Spain. Four days after my arrival at Cadiz, I received the following note, without signature :

“ You see, that I am a man that keeps his word. I have been waiting now a twelve-month for your return, at which I much rejoice. What discoveries have I to make to you ! At nine o’clock I am at your lodgings.”

Here the children interrupted Jago’s narrative, by calling out : “ Here comes father !” He had only time to add : “ This is the man, Don Carlos !”—I was looking at my host with astonishment, and on the point of asking him, “ What, do you know me ?”—when in came the old man, who faithfully answered the description he had given of him. He approached the fire, and now and then, cast a melancholy look upon the woman,

man, Jago and me. He either seemed to miss something in the place, or not to wish to make himself familiar with a stranger.

At last, he sat down with us. " You come from Alcantara, Sennor ;" said he. Jago answered in the affirmative. " It was a stormy night," added he ; " you may thank your fortune, that it brought you hither."

After a long pause, I was determined to break the silence, and laying hold of his hand, " Sennor," said I, " I know you. Jago has been telling me the story. Favor me with your friendship."

— " You don't know what you ask of me," replied he. " I, too, know you, Don Carlos. You are of the house of Grandez. I have lately seen and liked you. I'll do all I can. Only tell me, what you wish.

— " Your friend here, was just relating his return from America, when your arrival stopt the account. You was to visit him, to discover a secret respecting the old inscription-stone. What was it, pray ?"

Here he rose angry from his seat, exclaiming : " Has Jago thus—?" — He went again

to

to the fire, and in a few seconds pulled out his watch, saying : " It is six o'clock, Don Carlos, go now to Elmira. She expects you in the little chapel to the right. Return hither this day six weeks."

Overwhelmed with surprize, I was studying how to reply, when he suddenly vanished. " Powers ! " cried I, " how marvellous ? — Am I dreaming or in my sences ? "

" Follow him," said Jago, and rose likewise.

" One word more"—

" Not a syllable," replied Jago, " your horse is fed. Speed away ; and forget not to see us again."

" I will certainly not forget it, Jago."—I embraced him ; his eyes were brimful of tears ; my horse was at the door ; he showed me a small road, and when the sun edged the top of the mountain-brow, I was on the heath.

A thousand reflections thronged into my mind. I could not conceive, why Jago wept, and his lovely partner was so sullen, when the old man arrived. I could not re-

concile this picture of sadness to the enchanting scene of their domestic felicity. The cottage of innocence cannot be the haunt of crime, and had they been robbers, why did they not plunder me ?

Often had I hunted in that forest, but never knew such a hut to be in it. Various indeed were the reports of a haunted and ruinous castle, said to be in its centre ; but my way had never led me so far.

Agitated by a thousand strange illusions, my horse made a stop, and I saw a human form lie quite close to me, among the briars. As I alighted, it began to move. " Ah ! don't murder me, dear ghost, don't !" cried a human voice—it was Alfonso's. Shivering with cold, and quaking with terror, he wanted at my approach, to get away ; when I called out to him with a laugh :—" What the devil brought thee hither Alfonso ! Where's thy horse ! "

" Jesus Maria !" cried he, " is it you Don Carlos ? Is my Lord alive still ? To be sure, hell must be in this damned forest ? How did your honor manage to get out again ? " Thus declaiming, he crept forth from the briars.

" But

"But where's the horse, Alfonso?"

"Upon my life, I can't tell. Soon after your honor rode off, and left me behind, several lights were dancing about the moor; the animal took fright, threw me in a bog, and I have not seen him since. I have been creeping all night about this heath, pricked myself all over, and could not find my way after all. Pray help me to rise, I have sprain'd my foot and can't walk."

I lifted and put him on my horse. We soon arrived at a well known village, where I left the poor fellow under the care of a surgeon. I rode on in full gallop, and reached the Capuchin convent at St. Jago, exactly by 10 o'clock in the morning.

C H A P. III.

ON my arrival I went straight to the church, and approached the little chapel, pointed out to me at the hovel. Looking through the bars, I saw Elmira prostrate before the altar. Her face was half veiled; I

heard her sob ; and her eyes instead of being fixed on the crucifix, frequently roamed with a kind of inquietude through the church, as if she expected somebody to whom she wished to devote her whole being.

Divine service was now over, and the devout flock thronged through the gates. At last, the door of the chapel opened, and Elmira also came forth. I ran behind the door, and she was going to shut it, when pausing, as if she recollect^ded something she had forgotten, she stept back once more, to fetch a prayer-book, which she had left on her seat. She anxiously searched its leaves for something, and did not perceive me. I observed a little paper drop down on the ground, which I dexterously pickt up undiscovered. She went away seemingly vexed, when I called out without looking at the paper which had some writing on it : " Elmira, you have lost a paper here ! "

She turned round ; her knees began to totter, and rushing forwards to support her in my arms, she even forgot the fainting of terror and surprise, to snatch the paper from my hands,

hands, and carefully concealed it. "Have you read this paper?" asked she.

"No, Elmira."

"Are you sure of it?"

"Positively sure."

"This is exactly what I wished.—It was a letter from my aunt. I hope," added she with more composure, "you are not unwell? It has been a shocking night; you look paler than usual."

"A man should not mind trifles," answered I.

"Trifles?—Your mien and voice speak quite the reverse. For the present, Don Carlos, leave me alone. There are some people in yonder aisle, that might watch us. Go behind the convent-garden; in a quarter of an hour my maid shall conduct you to my apartment in the outbuildings."

I bowed, and obsequiously retired to the assigned place, where in a short time, the sourette came to me and in a much shorter still, I was in Elmira's drawing-room at her feet!

"It is well!" exclaimed she, "you are very hasty, Don Carlos."—The waiting-maid

had just left the apartment.—“ But how imprudent ! When will you be more discreet. I don’t like kneeling before me in a convent.”

“ Why, charming Elmira, not permit your confessor, to receive the sweet confession of your sins on his knees ?”

“ You are dreaming Carlos,” replied she with a smile, “ what do you mean by pratting about a confessor and sins ? Sure you don’t imagine, that I have any thing to confess to you ?”

“ What a misunderstanding, Elmira ! Yes, I own, that I thought as much. Do you only mean to divert yourself at my expence ? Else, why this assignation, this mysterious visit ?”

“ Not so fast, Carlos, but wait the time with patience. Yours it is to protect distressed damsels, and you don’t know, in what manner I wish to avail myself of your protection ?”

“ Is it so ? Tell me then, Madonna, how I can be of use to you ?” Here I rose coolly, and negligently placed myself by her side on the sofa.

“ O could

" O could I but bend your stubbornness," continued she, " but I despair of it.—Hear then, Don Carlos, my secret—but first tell me, is your heart free still?"

" My heart free still?" replied I with melting accents: " who could ask such a question with less reason than Elmira? Have not you read in my eyes—in my language—that it doats on you? Be not cruel, but for one property lost return me another!"

" There—there—you mistake me again. It is not love I want; but only a little pity, a little sympathy. I wish to devote you to my interest. You are a frank and generous young man, who always felt friendship enough, not to deny me his assistance."

" You may rely on it, Madam; but you speak so problematically—I love plain-dealing!"

" Then learn the great secret: Carlos! I **DO LOVE**—" here she modestly fixed her eyes on the ground, and hid her face in her handkerchief, as if she wanted to conceal the rising blush.

" And whom do you love?"

" Alas! A young man."

" No doubt of that, Elmira," returned I with a forced laugh ; " by the stars ! you are very unfortunate."

" And he is a person accomplished too.—"

" The sadder still."

" Don't sport with me, Carlos, for my passion is unrequited."

" That's the worst of all.—But you should hope, Elmira ; what influence soever I may have over him, I'll bestow it for your sake. But who is it ? What's his name?" With all the rapture of eager expectation I kissed her hand, and hoped instantly to hear myself named. But what was my disappointment when she whispered in a serious tone :

" It is Don Antonio, your friend ! Exercise for my sake all the influence you possess over him—but spare my honor."

This confession was a thunderstroke to me. My former loves had only been a struggle between caprice and vanity. The ladies had always more than half way met my advances, I had

I had never experienced true resistance, and conscious of the impressions which I was able to make upon willing objects, my endeavours had favored of indifference, and my heart never opened to real tenderness, had thus far floated superficially on the level of short-lived desire. Thus the secure rose-bud, which frolics wanton and wavering, for a while, in the caresses of kissing zephyrs, droops at last, an expanded flower, under the fading embraces of the sun.

Overwhelmed with sentiment, I bowed my head low to the ground : "Ah!" exclaimed I, Elmira, this is too much to bear!"

Her beauteous eyes dwelt on me for a moment : "be comforted," said she, I solemnly vow you friendship and esteem. Can you desire more?"

" Give me death," answered I, " I shall not live to see you in another's arms. Your pity or destruction!"

" Take courage, Sennor ; your heart is noble. It cannot value friendship less than love."

" I reject friendship ; I abhor it ; I scorn the remains of another's pity." Here I rose.—" One word more, Elmira, was the paper you dropt to day from Antonio ?"

" No, Carlos, it was not.—Be a man ; be my friend, I have offered you all I dare."

" That's too much, Elmira. What can life be to me deprived of all hope. Farewell, and live happy ! I cannot think of persuading another to accept a heart, which to me alone would have been an eternity of bliss ! Adieu, Elmira !" I kissed her hand, without being able to behold her face. Her heart beat audibly ; her hand was in a violent tremor ; I gently put it on her lap, and went to the door.

" How much am I mistaken in you, Don Carlos ; but if you insist on going, come hither once more." I obeyed. " Kneel down." I fell in deep prostration at her feet. She clasped one of her hands about my neck, and, in roseate blushes, her angel's face inclined to mine. Her eyes swam in liquid fire. " One word more Carlos ; pardon me ! That Antonio is no other than thyself."—My senses vanished,

vanished, I felt nothing more than a stormy bosom pressed convulsive on mine, two ardent lips, and glowing tears which bathed my cheeks.

When I recovered, her love-beaming eyes were fondly fixed on me. "Enchantress!" cried I, "how sweetly you compensate the anguish you made me endure."

"Always think so Carlos; I have sold thee my heart, but I hope not too dearly."

"Elmira; my whole being is thine. Each sentiment bears thy image. But pardon my diffidence. Can you tell me what the paper contains which you keep so anxiously concealed?"

"I can tell you, but will it avail to give you uneasiness? You had better let it rest."

"Your wish is my law; but I must confess, that I felt some curiosity of seeing it."

"Just as you please Carlos; but don't be agitated; I have more faith in my eyes and thee, than in this wretched paper."—She now produced it. It was either written with red ink or blood. These were its contents, with three crosses in lieu of signature :

“Countess Elmira Dacosta is hereby warned
“against Don Carlos de Grandez, who means to
“seduce her.”

+
+ +

“Where did you find it?” asked I somewhat alarmed.

“In my prayer-book.”

“Do you know the hand?”

“No, but I suspect it. Let me tell thee a secret, Carlos. It is long since such mysterious papers have been circulating throughout Spain. Nobody knows the writing, and the writers interfere and govern all private transactions. You must, doubtless, have heard the story of Count Orello, who eloped with a young lady, without the consent of her parents, and those unknown Caballists. A week after, they were both found lifeless in the nuptial bed. Don Hermez disagreed with his father, and disappeared after having murdered him by command of that dread cabal. They only write with blood, and three crosses are their signet.

My

My astonishment naturally led me to ask Elmira, how she came to know all this?

"It has already been my lot," said she, "to feel their fatal influence; to relate the particulars now, would cost me my life; but depend on hearing them fully some day, and be not alarmed, as it has nothing to do with you or our reputation."

I now told her my adventure on the preceding night. She exclaimed marvelling: "I think the whole is a plot to part us. They could not foresee, that our meeting would terminate in this manner. They speculated rather upon my fear than the strength of my affection. Give me thy hand, Carlos, and let us swear, that nothing, not even death itself shall ever disunite us."

We both took the oath, with enthusiastic rapture, and dwelt, for some minutes, tranced with delight, in each other's arms.

"I have a proposal to make Carlos," whispered Elmira, with a look of celestial frankness. "Let us now join these hands for ever. I have plenty of jewels and dresses; I'll follow thee anywhere, nay to the world's end if you desire

desire it. No country is too remote, no cottage too humble for thy Elmira. I will henceforth know no other duty but that of pleasing my Carlos and sweetening his hours. Shall it be so?"

I was holding the adorable creature fast to my beating heart, and had only power to utter faltering these words: "Ah! Elmira, I do not deserve thee."

"And why should you not? Come, come. 'Tis love for love. In half an hour, the priest will be ready to unite us in everlasting bliss."

My heart was too big with joy. I could only lisp my soul-felt consent.

"Now, come!" said she, leading me down a secret flight of steps. We passed through a long winding gallery, till she stopt at a door, and giving a gentle knock, cried: "Holy father, I am ready." A friar came out, and silently led the way to the altar, where he joined our hands and gave us the usual blessing.

I cannot forbear to mention one circumstance, which very much alarmed me during the performance of the ceremony. Thrice a shrill whistling pierced the echoing porch, like

like the redoubled shriek of the nightly bat. Thrice Elmira turned pale, and at the fourth time, she fainted. Soon the vital spirits revived her shaken frame, she kissed me, and said, " Carlos, withdraw for the present, and meet me at night in my apartment."

The sun had already passed the meridian in his course ; the day was sultry, and I sought the lonely shades of the grove. Some fresh breezes from the West braced my languid nerves, and the beautiful prospect of nature exhilarated the gloom of my agitated mind. The limpid rill appeared to me the emblem of a gladsome futurity ; I only saw the rose-trees that nodded over its banks, without discovering the rocky bed, through which it painfully wrought its stream.

Evening came, and I found Elmira on her sopha, blooming in all the renewed charms of health and youthful fondness. Her bridal arms soon entwined my form, and gently pressed me close to her side. The hours glided away in ecstatic delight ; we counted each minute lest it should steal away too fast, and yet they insensibly glided away. Midnight drew

drew near; and we began to think more seriously of the preparations for enjoying the first hymeneal repose. Elmira made an hundred proposals, each did away each, and we agreed on none. I was all compliance, and feasted my ravished eyes with the spectacle of the rich treasure, that had crowned my fervent passion.

Quite lost in contemplating the graces and attractions of my heavenly consort, I remarked, that she became somewhat pale ; her eyes grew languid, and the ruby of her lips began to lose its incarnate hue. I gazed on her with astonishment, but ascribed this change, either to the reverberation of the tapers, or to my own illusion. Soon, however, the pallor augmented visibly, the fire of her eyes became suddenly extinct, her upper lip moved in convulsive tremor, her whole face seemed to lengthen, and I exclaimed in broken and incoherent words, Heavens ! Elmira, what ails thee ? ” — “ I’m very well, my love : ” returned she faltering. At the same moment her eyes grew quite dim, her teeth gnashed, and she wound herself towards me, in an agony

agony of convulsions, a distorted mouth, and a ghastly stare—her ice-cold face sunk over mine, and her hands seized my arms with twitching violence. Terrified I rose, and could hardly get loose from her hold; I gently laid her on the sofa, when she uttered a loud groan, and instantly expired. I had lost the very power to call for help, but at last her woman entered the room.

No sooner did she see me in mute sorrow and despair at the feet of her beloved and now lifeless mistress, than a fresh scene of distress ensued. In such dreadful moments there is no distinction of birth or rank. The poor girl had lost a mother in her benefactress; a torrent of impetuous feelings made her fall half-senseless on the corpse; pouring out a thousand lamentations, and embracing with distracted tenderness its pallid cheeks and chilled limbs. Her attachment to Elmira had been invariable, no wonder therefore that her grief was boundless. Orphan-like she bemoaned a parent gone, and ultimately overpowered, by the weight of her doleful sensations, she, too,—sunk unconscious on the floor.

It

It was long before she recovered her reason. She ran for help ; the body was diligently rubbed and warmed ; but no art could bring back the ethereal spirit to its deserted mansion. The great heat of the weather soon filled the place with the offensive symptoms that follow dissolution, and after paying the solemn obsequies to her memory, the last requiem was chanted, and her remains committed to the family-vault.

Who can conceive my condition, that has not felt it ? What language can describe the situation of a wretch, who at the moment he tastes supreme happiness, is hurled down into the deepest abyss of sorrow, suffering, and despair ? Isolated, widowed, for ever separated from all I hold dear, in the fever of my delirious brain, I made many an attempt to rid myself of that being which was now insupportable ; but the hand which spins and cuts off the thread of human life, arrested mine, by the vigilance of my keepers. It was in vain for me to seek destruction in every breath ; fate had decreed that I should live.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

AT this trying period, my faithful Alfonso was of great service to me. The moment he heard of the danger I was in, he flew, forgetting his own recovery, to my assistance. He never lost sight of me, and studied every remedy to dispel the melancholy of my deep-diseased mind.

The first thing he did, during the paroxysms of my delirium, was, to detach me from every object, which at the lucid intervals of returning reason, could have reminded me of my loss. Without any mental perception as I was for several days, he could do with me as he pleased. With proper assistance, he provided a carriage, and drove me to an adjacent Villa of my father's, whom he apprised of my misfortune. The latter with all our family came to comfort and cheer me ; a thousand schemes were tried to make me recover some part of my former gaiety, but sorrow was too deeply rooted in my bosom, to be plucked out by the

the contrivances of the moment ; even the sweet adulations of the fair sex were used to put me in spirits, but their presence only ript open the gash my bosom had received by the loss of my incomparable bride ; and the faculty at last gave it as their opinion, that nothing but a temporary solitude would cure my distempered imagination, and all other means merely tend to plunge me into a state of incurable insanity.

Their advice was strictly adhered to ; my senses gradually resumed their lost functions, though it seemed a matter of doubt, whether my emaciated frame would be able to bear the first keen shocks of new roused sensibility.

At last I got better, but a shade of settled melancholy characterized all my actions. The adventure of the forest was always present to my remembrance. I had become more considerate, and even somewhat timorous. Without any person, in whom I thought proper to place my confidence, I wavered indecisively from one resolve to another. Don Antonio, the friend of my youth, was certainly most tender to me, but not sufficiently

ently steady and serious. I wanted maturer experience, seasoned with prudential practice.

Accident soon gratified my wishes. Don Pedro Nunez, a young nobleman of Granada, purchased a country-residence close to my father's. Though still in the vigor of youth, yet misfortune had visited him earlier than me. Popular report stated him to have run his sword through the body of a once adored wife, whom he caught in the act of adultery, and to have made her seducer share the same punishment. With the possession of a once faithful consort, he had lost every relish for social life, and came to mourn in solitude the severe blows of treacherous fate.

His gardens being contiguous to mine, I often saw him in his lonely haunts, trying to obliterate the sense of his woes by the various amusements and occupations of gardening.

A little brook divided our respective domains. My side of the premises, being obscured by a thicket of high bushes, I could easily see him without being seen. I soon perceived a structure in form of a monument with an urn at its top, raised by his orders.

Here,

Here, in deep meditation, he would regularly pass certain hours of the day.

As there is a sort of kindred sympathy between those that suffer, I one day resolved to speak to him. After the usual forms of courteous salutation: "Sennor," cried I to him, "I cannot suppress the wish of getting nearer acquainted with you."

After returning the compliment with a pleased smile: "I have long been thinking as much, Don Carlos," replied he; "but as I well know your story, I was apprehensive lest my sufferings should only add to your own. I esteem you, and your friendship will make me infinitely happy."

From this time we sought the remedy of love, in the sweet communications of mutual friendship. But we carefully avoided reviving the images of past felicity, and contented ourselves with the recital of the less interesting particulars of our lives."

One day however, he swerved from the accustomed rule, by relating his story. It appeared, that he had married Donna Francisca, who, amidst the vortex of high-life had proved unfaithful to his bed, and eloped with

with another, without his having the least traces of the place of her retreat. Thus the rumor of her assassination was unfounded. Still he adored her—still would he have sacrificed his all, had she returned repentant to his arms.

I then informed him minutely all the particulars of my own case.

—"Have you no conjectures," asked he, about the secret of the cabal?"

—"None but what might be collected from what Elmira imparted to me ; it must be a great and powerful league whose influence reaches even the actions of private families, all over Spain."

—"And could you really never perceive the drift of its tendency?"

—"Not in the least, Señor ; not as much as guess at it."

—"Recollect once more all the circumstances of the hovel in the woods. Was there no latent interest that guided the actions of its tenants ? No constraint, no feint in their demeanor?"

—"Certainly not. I surprised them. The women could have nothing to fear ; and such affection

affection as Jago evinced for his wife, is beyond the sphere of dissimulation. The very infants partook in it."

—“ And did the woman actually weep, as you went away ?”

—“ To me, it seemed so. But of Jago’s tears I am certain.”

—“ Still I am in the dark. It seems, however, they are mere tools in the hands of the old fellow, who is their chief.”

—“ But I do not see, what reason they should have to brook such insulting slavery ? After all, oppressed as they are by poverty, what would it now avail them to fly ! They show indeed, that spontaneous and easy resignation, which indicates they are both contented with their humble lot.”

—“ I conceive you, Don Carlos, and this makes me still more curious of the secret of the cavern. They probably are members of the cabal, and solely actuated by its laws and principles. Their plan must be grand—”

—“ But sanguinary, too, I am much afraid.”

—“ Con-

—“Consider, Sennor; always make allowance for accident. In this case, the actions are unjust only because our understanding cannot divine the motives. Who is he that boasts penetration sufficient to explore at the first glance every secret stimulus or cause of a design? For my part, I believe murder is, in some instances, justifiable. On a piece of wreck which can only carry one man with safety in a storm, the combat between two, tending to secure life by the death of a competitor, is justifiable by the first law of self-preservation. Object bears upon object throughout the creation. Each death opens the gate of some new existence; and the general good cannot always be brought about without individual harm.”

—“Every body is not of the same opinion, Don Pedro; for my part, I am lost in the flattering dream.”

“Don’t you take it quite for a dream, Don Carlos; my precepts are drawn from experience. You don’t know the company that offered itself to you. Remember Jago and his happiness.”

Here terminated this part of our conversation, by a digression to other topics.

The notions I had imbibed afforded me ample scope for reflection; but still I groped in the dark, and only felt a livelier desire of getting acquainted with the secret purposes of the mystic cabal.

The next day on meeting my neighbor, we resumed the lost thread of our preceding afternoon's conversation.

"How were it, Don Carlos," said he, "if we made some bold push to get at the bottom of the probabilities, on which we so much descanted yesterday." This was guessing my wishes. I perfectly coincided with him, and we daily thought of proper steps to accomplish our purpose, but daily some new incident diverted us from it.

My friend Pedro had invited me one night to supper. He was rather unwell, and to avoid the draught of the air, had chosen our seats in a small lodge of the garden, from which we had a beautiful prospect of the closing beauties of the day. The cloth being drawn, I read to him the story of a favorite author. His back faced the door, and his melancholy looks

looks were stedfastly fixed on my countenance. I was at the same time attentively occupied with my reading.

At once I heard a loud scream. Terrified I cast up my eyes ; Pedro sinks fainting from his chair, and a wan and woe-worn face rests on his shoulder. I felt it from my soul ;— it was Francisca.

After kneeling for some time, she rose, and embraced my friend, who was somewhat better, “ Tranquillize yourself,” cried she, “ my dear spouse, compose yourself to pardon a wife, that comes to bid you a last farewell.”

His speech still failed him, but he gave her his hand.

“ No, I thank you, Pedro,” said she, after kissing his hand, “ I will not deceive you a second time. A repentant, tormented wife, that wrested herself from her seducer at the moment when she was a going to be for ever undone asketh your blessing.”

She now threw herself again at his feet.

—“ No Francisca,” returned he, “ I take back this repentant wife to my bosom. Long

have I forgiven thee all my wrongs, and now
I'll also bury them in everlasting oblivion."

—“ You mistake me, Pedro, if you think
me capable of abusing your bounty. No
—take back your heart. You never can love
a delinquent. Never can I give you hap-
piness. I will not deceive you, Pedro ; give
me but your blessing.”

My poor friend was quite distracted at this
nipping coldness of his comfort. Those ter-
rible words, uttered in the tone of a common
conversation, caused a struggle in his heart
between tenderness and pride, to exhaust
which I judged would be death to him. I
considered it as my duty to interpose in the
business.

“ You see, Madonna,” began I, “ the
feeble and infirm state of your husband. If
you are come hither to kill him with bar-
barity, it will require but little more to gain
your end. But excuse me, Madonna, if I
show myself anxious for the preservation of a
life, which I have learn'd to value.”

—“ Dismiss me not,” exclaimed she again,
disdaining my remonstrances, “ dismiss me
not

not Pedro without thy forgiveness. This man wants to part us. Give me thy blessing, and joyfully will I be gone."

—“I cannot bless thee, Francisca,” answered he with quavering lips; “ ‘tis only on a wretched female that one takes and rejects again, a man gives his blessing as a vengeance. Return to these tender arms, my ever dear, my ever beloved wife. Myself, perhaps, has partly occasioned thy errors, return and let me expiate the crime on thy bosom.”

—“No, Pedro, thy wife’s bosom has no solace, no joy more for thee. ‘Tis a hell, burning with incessant pangs! No, Pedro, no! Or bless me—or grant me one last request!

—“And what is that Francisca?”

She rose, went out of the garden-gate, and so very fanguine was my expectation, that I was unable to use the interval to comfort my unhappy friend. In a few minutes she made her re-appearance, with a sweet little boy, about four years old, in her arms. Her

very looks portended that her mind was brooding some great purpose.

"Come, Lorenzo," quoth she, kneeling a second time, "thou shalt see thy father. Here he is—go, and kiss him."

"Is it he, mother?" asked the prattling little innocent, "he says nothing to me."

—"What shall this mean, Francisca?" interrupted my friend.

—"Let me, my husband," said she, "trespass for a few minutes on thy patience. You know, that on leaving you, I bore a pledge of your love, under my heart. It might grieve you to know it in bad hands, I will therefore return it now."

—"Ah, Francisca, that I never had a living witness of thy cruelty."

—"Interrupt me not, dear spouse. It is the last will, the last sigh of a dying woman. Remembereſt thou, Pedro, the days of my bridal state, when I dropt into thy longing arms, a guiltless wife?—Behold, it was then, I received this pledge as the intended token of lasting bliss. The time is past; and here thou haſt it again."

"O!

—“O! Must I live to see this?” exclaimed my bewildered friend.

“Hearken to me, Pedro! Thou wishest for no living witness of my cruelty. Such, too, is my opinion; I want none of my shame—I have been thinking of means,” pursued she pausing, clapping her left hand on her front, and grasping with the right, a dagger from her bosom—“I will relieve us both.”—Here she pointed the dagger at the babe’s bosom, while suspecting the horrid attempt, I wrested it from her. “Alas! I am lost,” cried she flushing with irresistible violence out of doors, and running to overtake her, I found she had entirely vanished.

On my return, I found my hapless friend playing with the little prattler. It was a moving scene! The child had been long in his father’s arms and quite delighted till he missed his mother, and then became quite distressed. I talked to him, consoled, and played with him, and his presence opened a prospect of new hopes and expectations to the widowed parent. “Her maternal heart doated on this infant,” said

he, "she surely will return, and share my joys."

My principal care now was to divert his melancholy. We talked over the plan of going in search of the cavern in the forest. It was resolved to put it in execution in defiance of every danger that might thwart our design.

Having made every preparation, consistent with our safety, and determined to sell our lives at the dearest price, we sallied forth one morning, and arrived at the hovel at mid-day. But it was empty, nor was there a single mark of a human vestige in the whole district. What could it mean? Pedro who had repented his rash enterprise all the way coming along, sought in this a frivolous pretence, and finding me obstinate in the matter, rode off jeering, and left me behind.

C H A P. V.

WHEN night drew on, the wind whirled howling through the foliage of the aged oaks, the cataracts of the sky poured down

down diluvian showers, and having entered the hut for shelter, it shook so violently, that I feared every moment to be crushed under its ruins. At one time, the place seemed to brighten up, at another the faint gleam of light darting in from the window-gap was dissolved again in chaotic darkness. My fancy floated on a sea of horrors, and every dismal traditional tale I had ever heard of this forest, seized on my alarmed senses. My anguish was still more increased by the unruliness, the stamping, and neighing of my horse, which was tied to one of the beams of the miserable shed. In a word, it was one of the most frightful nights I ever passed in my life.

At last, I heard some stirring about the cot, and a soft whispering like that of human voices. It grew louder and louder by degrees, and at the end I could plainly distinguish some words. Instead of rejoicing in my dread solitude at the approach of company I really began to shudder.

Meanwhile a pale beam of light broke faster and faster through the little window; the

door opened, and the old man stept in. He held a torch in his hand, and his features bore the same antipathy and gloomy indifference.

"What is it you, Don Carlos," said he; "I heard your horse, and suppose you are come to redeem your pledged word?"

"Yes, Scenor," answered I rising from the ground. "You probably did not wait for me; because your business—"

"As for that," interrupted he, "it is my business to be obliged to wait.—But will you now come along with me?"

I replied in the affirmative; my horse was tied faster; he lighted another torch, which he gave me, and on we went, forcing our way through thickets, briars and thorny bushes. No path being to be seen, I had much ado to wind after him through the stubborn wilds; soon I lost my hat; my clothes got entangled among the thorns, and were almost torn to pieces before we reached a small lawn, where we rested ourselves for a few seconds.

Here our way led us into an abyss, whose rugged descent was full of half-sinking rocks, from whence several cascades rushed with a terrible

terrible roar into a fathomless depth. Every object bore the awful marks of hoary antiquity.

" Whither do you lead me, Sennor," exclaimed I impelled by secret horror.

" To a place," answered he, " where a man of courage and sentiment need never be afraid of going!"

" I am a stranger to idle fears. But what have I to expect?"

" Your own feelings should tell you that, Carlos. You are partly acquainted with Jago's story. A SOCIETY OF MEN waits for you. You wish perhaps to participate in their grand designs. Can you resolve to submit yourself to voluntary ties?"

" I dare say I can; but what is to be my compensation?"

" To shake off the involuntary one. But fear nothing, Carlos. You will be happy some day, but we cannot expect the reward before the action. The society are men of sublime virtue, of a world swaying spirit, free from prejudices, sustaining the burden of life in the fair light of wholesome truth. Be you

leagued or not leagued with them, I'll warrant you liberty in their name. But suspend your curiosity for the present, as well as your fears ; for you are now like him that has never been thirsty, and wishes to comprehend the comfort of a refreshing bowl. Let's double our steps, 'tis time to get forward."

The stupendous ridges of pending rocks now began gradually to spread into an amphitheatric space. The mountains to the right and left lost themselves slowly in the level of a wide and bushy dale. The morn began to fill the rare chasms of the leafy covert with contracted prospects of the rosy dawn. The torch-light grew paler, and the rising perfumes of revived vegetation exhaled whole clouds of balsamic sweet. Often had I hunted in the forest, but never seen this delightful spot, which quite captivated my romantic fancy. We entered a small park ; the orange-trees were in full bloom ; the nightingale now sang her last melody of amorous woe ; the quail's shrill note rung in rising peals through the echoing mountain-chain ; the lark thrilled her matin hymn in the lofty arches of the sky, and soon all the birds

birds joined to welcome us in universal chorus. We entered a long half-decayed gallery that led us into a castle, whose tottering structure supported its weight on the front of a fanciful hillock. Many of the windows of the old mansion were strongly barred with iron. We entered the gate, and descended a long tortuous flight of steps, passing through several narrow corridors, and spacious caves, till we came into a large room, where my guide put out the torches, and went away, bidding me wait his return.

Full an hour had I waited, sitting half exhausted on the floor; nobody came, and like an aspen leaf, I shook with fear. At last a door opened, two muffled figures with torches beckoned, and conducted me arm in arm into a large saloon, and I now thought myself in the company of friends and brothers.

The saloon was superbly illuminated, three elegant chandeliers with crystal branches and wax-lights, hung from its ceiling, which, with the walls, being covered with pier-glasses, reflected every object all over the place. A numerous assembly of persons veiled in white,

first

first struck my astonished eyes. They were sitting on low chairs forming a demi-circle, in whose centre a high seat was raised, for the chief of the society. The chief was on his post, with a table before him, on which there were lying a cross, a dagger, a cup, several books and other instruments unknown to me. An empty stool was placed for me immediately below the chandeliers. My conductors took their seats, and after a long and solemn silence of several minutes, the president rose, advanced to the table, and unveiled his face, whose aspect was incredibly prepossessing, with features full of bounty mingled with the traces of bitter experience. He seemed to be a perfect pattern of pure humanity ; his looks appeared to range beyond an earthly sphere, and I could almost have knelt down and worshipped him.

"Thou art come hither, Carlos," began he with ineffable mildness, "to learn to know us."

I affirmed his question with a respectful silence.

"Then unveil yourselves, my brethren."

The whole assembly now dropt their veils.

What

What an elevated scene ! A society of beings whose faces shone with patriarchal softness. The old man and Jago were among them ; but a seriousness bordering on melancholy sat on their countenance. Their looks were steadily fixed on the venerable chief.

“ What wouldst thou have of us, Carlos ? ”

“ As you said before : to learn to know your society.”

“ And to be admitted one of its members, I suppose ? ”

“ I have duties to fulfil as a man, and if you will not impede them I am yours.”

“ And what are those duties ? ”

“ To love mankind ; to be their friend and benefactor ; to forgive mine enemies ; and love those that wish me well : in short to live in peace and love with every one.”

“ With every one ? — Ponder well what you have spoken ! ”

“ Yes—venerable Sire, with every one.”

“ Are these duties from which no circumstances will make thee deviate ; against which thy reason’s conviction shall not sometimes avail ? ”

“ Never ! ”

"Never!"

"Then thou wilt not do for our covenant!
—Lead him away brethren."

"Reject me not rashly, reverend father, condemn me not untried. First tell me, what you demand, and what the covenant of your brethren exacteth? Then I'll be candid, and own myself, if nothing forbid it, wholly yours."

"We demand nothing of thee, Carlos, but the very thing thou hast refused to do. To be one of us, thou must dissolve all the ties, which consecrate man to man. Our property is all of this world. Slay thy father, plunge a poniard in thy mother's breast, and, with open arms, will we receive thee. When humanity casts thee off, when the laws persecute thee, a scourge of the state, then be welcome among us. But our covenant disdains the tear of pity."—

"Horrid!"

"And why horrid?—Don't we offer compensation? For one talent expended, thou'll here find a million of gain. Is it nothing to thee, to call the whole vast world thine? Is it
a poor

* poor bargain to give up a sister for a thousand brethren?"

" I hear your words, but cannot comprehend them."

" Then wretch!—Remain the property of thy father's dust. Blind be thine eyes to the light; and fenceless thy heart against the sorrows of life!"

" Why curse me, respected chief? I do not spurn your words, but teach me to understand them. Lead me to the sanctuary of your laws, and then try my docility as a pupil."

" Thou has sought us, Don Carlos: It was thou who didst challenge us to appear before thee. But hast thou maturely poised the consequences, by only seeing us, and then refusing to be of our number? Many a light kills with splendor. Art thou not sensible, that it needs but one word to snatch thee forever from the natural course of things, or to make thee at least, forget those men, to whose benefit thou imputest the main purpose of thy being?"

At

At these words a choleric flush dyed the faded cheeks of the hoary Sire.

" I am well aware of all that," answered I with bold composure. " I even expected it. Forsaken by fortune's smiles, and past all hopes, I renounced every pretension to a life, that had ceased to be my property. Willingly shall I devote it to him that demands it lawfully. But unlawfully?—I have friends."

Here the whole assembly turned pale, and looked consternation at each other: " How villain!" cried my guide, " thou hast betrayed us?"—

" I have not betrayed you, because I never had your confidence. Crossed in all things, I exchanged my ideas of your covenant with those of Don Pedro, a friend with whom accident made me acquainted, and whose notions of your society were still more favorable than mine. And why should I not be permitted to have cherished suppositions!—And was it a crime, to have endeavoured to solve the mystic obscurities which you have burdened me with?—Have I used force to gain admission to this assembly? Was it not you that

that brought me into it, by the influence you practise on circumstances ? My family will miss me, of course. Ye know my father. Balance your danger with the value of my death. You have vowed me liberty and safety, by one of your members ; ill betide those that do not keep their first vow !”

When I mentioned the person to whom I had entrusted my secret, the faces of the assembly grew more tranquil. I easily judged my life was safe, but felt vexed to find threats where I had only expected love.

“ Fear not, Carlos,” resumed the president ; why should we wish to compel a person we truly love ? Hear us but this hour ; the next will find thee at liberty.”

“ I am all compliance, my father.”

“ Thou know’st our country. Thou must feel thyself aggrieved in the whole nation. All its states are confused, or rather extinguished in one, I mean despotism. The people are wretched slaves. Necessity brought this society together, and oppression rivets its bands. Necessity made it secret and solitary ; a century rendered it wise. Experience guides it

guides it more and more to less rigorous measures. The covenant chose the wisest heads of the people, and those initiated in its secrets, feel themselves happy."

" And was the tendency of the covenant always general?"

" As general as the world. All countries are ours by our members ; and this is but the secret centre of our collective force."

" Was the universal government of the world its destination?"

" No ; but the happiness of the world in universal government."

" And what were the means?"

" Behold the symbols on this table! Faith, the dagger, and the poison-cup."

I shuddered violently.

" Why shrinks our new adopted brother?"

" It was but the effect of a horrid recollection.. Alas ! I had a wife ; a sweet and tender consort !—You write with blood ! Three crosses are your signet !—Accursed be your covenant—accursed be it for ever!—You have robbed me of her."

" What

“ What signifies thy wild raving?”—

“ Thou art mistaken ; my resentment is cool and collected, dare you own yourselves the murderers of the beautiful Elmira?”

“ I swear it, Don Carlos : by the eternal God ! By the terrors of this mystic cave ! By this cross and dagger ! We did not murder her.”

“ Then pardon me, holy Sire. Let my despair seize the ruffian—”

“ Thou wilt, one day, attain him by our means.”

“ Do you promise it faithfully ?”

“ Our promise is sacred.”

“ Then will I be yours — wholly yours. Speak, command, what shall I do ?”

“ Nothing but to discard all doubts ; to confide in our decrees ; to obey our ordinances ; to act thy part manfully. Daggers and poison are the solace of humanity. From the urn of one spring up a thousand lives. If human weal desire the fall of that one man, were he the monarch himself — he ought to fall.—”

“ What,

—“ What, turn a regicide?”

—“ Yes, if necessary, against an hundred kings. Liberty is the inalienable property of man. Who dares encroach on it is a villainous miscreant. Who exchanges it for idle prosperity, is an impostor. Who feels himself strong enough to punish crime, is his natural judge. Our ancestors gave us kings, we re-demand our rights, and subject them to a superior control.”

—“ But do you judge as justly as monarchs do?”

—“ Our covenant has many members, and they all are free. Caprice and intrigue seldom ground our resolves.”

—“ The monarch’s existence, you say, is owing to our ancestors voluntary submission. They transferred to his exercise and use their imprescriptible and connate rights. But who gave you power, to take those rights from him? Who guarantees the justice of your sentiments, the equity of your decrees? Irritated against government, you mix your feelings with the idea of universal oppression, and obeying yourselves no other law but the dictates

dictates of provoked desires, you plunge humanity, unable to govern herself, into the tormenting alternative, of making use of an unknown and quite foreign arbitration."

—“ Ah, Carlos, little dost thou know us! Voluntarily did we retire from the lap of that felicity, which men pursue. To be useful to humanity, which did not misprise us, and loudly extolled our friendship, we renounced the fairest wish of sublime minds, immortality—to guide them in solitary remoteness. Thus occupied for a long series of years, a thousand errors which we corrected but with difficulty, the unity of our end, the zeal and number of our co-operations, all has sharpened our sight, and without pretensions to the world’s joys, we there see light, where other men’s eyes view nothing but darkness.”

“ Believe me, Carlos,” continued he taking me by the hand, “ thyself too, shall once with full confidence adhere to our faith. Ah, the holy bosom of solitude, abounds with heavenly flights; and from night’s most impenetrable darkness, will spring the noblest of projects.”

Whether

Whether from fatigue, or by some strange influence, I here sunk into the old man's arms. "Come near, my brethren," cried he, "and take the oath of love from his lips."

At this moment a hundred arms and embraces encircled my body; stammering and bewildered I took the dreadful oath; the hand on the cross, intoxicated with a draught of some liquor presented to me in the cup, I sank at the foot of the altar, they bared my right arm, plunged the dagger in it, and the warm blood being collected in a bowl, went round among the members to be swallowed.

At last the hoary chief embraced me once more. "Now, my son," said he, "be gone, and receive the reward thou meritest."

The assembly broke up, and I was conducted out of the saloon. Jago went up stairs and showed me the garden-door. The perspective was charming, and the balsamic exhalations of the night still struggled with the rising sultriness of the morning. It was about nine o'clock. I walked about to contemplate the beauties of nature, and all my senses

fenses felt themselves roused to love and happiness. A clear and serene sky widened the horizon over the luxuriant scenes of this enchanting dale. Only the warm agitation of odoriferous scents hovered about the trees, and painted with blushing salubrity the load of fruits, which peeped with picturesque beauty through their deep green leaves. Every thing seemed to invite to the most perfect enjoyment; every thing seemed to belong to the still bosom of a paradise, in which even a god would have forgot himself.

How inadequate are my descriptive powers to trace those images of fairy enchantment. All the past was now wrapt up in a purple cloud, and the present gradually displaying itself, like the first rays of the morning-sun. I laid musing beneath the hospitable shade of a group of trees, when the sounds of distant music roused me from my reverie. The swelling sounds of pastoral flutes ravished my listening ears, and suddenly a female form, dressed in a loose and floating white garment, advanced coyly from an arbour that was facing me. She wore a fine veil of crape

over her face, whose transparency slightly showed a thousand attractions. She closely accosted and embraced me, when I discovered the most seducing paragon of female perfection. An impetuous crowd of irresistible desires made me, in mute rapture, return the caresses of the charming creature, and we both plunged into a sea of voluptuous enjoyment.

—“ Ah, Carlos,” said she with a solicitous countenance suffused with a thousand ingenuous blushes, “ wilt thou be grateful for this sacrifice?”

—“ Alas!” cried I, “ the boon thou hast bestowed on me, is past all retribution human gratitude can offer.”

—“ Thy love, Carlos, will be a thousand fold return. Yes, cherished by thee, Rosalia will be the happiest of beings. But what is to warrant me thy fidelity?”

—“ Thy charms, Rosalia, and thy bounty. Never, no never will I cease to adore such unrivalled accomplishments.”

—“ How many women hast thou not tantalized with the same professions! Was there, tell

tell me, one among them less bounteous than I? But I was sensible, when I first saw thee among us, of what might be the surest way to bind thy affections. How infinitely did I love thee, standing with manly firmness before thy judges, bidding defiance to the terrors of death, and fearing no other judge than thy conscience? How did thy Rosalia tremble for thee as thou refusedst to take the oath, and with what ecstasy did I witness thy final consent! Say, wilt thou faithfully keep this voluntary vow?"

— "I certainly will."

— "Then swear it to me, too, Carlos."

— "I swear it by thy heavenly charms! I lay my hand on thy fair bosom, as my most sacred altar, and there pledge myself never to break the obligation."

— "That is not sufficient. Swear now to me, and to the covenant of our loves, that thou wilt devote all thy faculties and powers to the service of the society of thy new brethren."

— "Can I answer for the future, Rosalia? Will it not be enough in some cases, to be

a mere passive member? Should I, in the bosom of love, renounce the feelings of humanity of which thou surely approvest?"

—“ I don’t Carlos exact quite so much. I purely desire thou shouldest find in me a compensation for all others. A thousand women will love thee, but not one of them so fervently as I do. Sacrifice, therefore, all thou possessest to thy indulgent and tender Rosalia?”

—“ Say, sweet maid, what have I that can fully gratify thy wishes?” —

—“ Nothing at present, my love, but soon thou wilt perhaps have a great deal. Is there no female whom thou cherishest more than myself.”

—“ Positively, none.”

—“ And no wife?”

—“ None.”

—“ Didst thou never love thus ardently?”

—“ Yes, Rosalia, if not more so. It was Elmira—”

—“ I know her,” interrupted she with an angry mien.

—“ How? Thou knowest her.”

At

At these words she visibly grew pale and attempted to conceal her embarrassment.—“Yes,” added she, “I once saw her, I believe, at Madrid.”

—“Elmira never was there.”

—“Then it was at Alcantara—one forgets such things. And dost thou not think, that we perhaps know thy story better than thyself?—But promise me, Carlos, to renounce every woman for my sake, even thy Elmira, if she still were alive?”

—“I will gladly renounce every one, but Elmira.”

—“So thou wouldest abandon me, traitor, if she were to appear again among the living?”

—“I would carry you both in my heart.”

—“No woman, Carlos, will content herself with half a heart. Now choose, me or Elmira.”

—“Elmira is dead, I choose thee.”

“Now I thank thee, Carlos, and fly to thy bosom a faithful, devoted bride! May the powers that surround us invisible, shower blessings on this union!”

We now sat down to a frugal repast, which some veiled females served up on the green, and spent the day in inexhaustible transports of love. Towards evening she clapped her hands as a signal, and twelve beautiful damsels assembled on the lawn, and began a mystic dance, whose voluptuous attitudes revived my desires. No sooner had they disappeared, than I again lockt my Rosalia in my arms, where we tasted in long draughts the inexpressible sweets of connubial bliss. The soft symphony of the flutes then rocked us into a sound sleep, from which we did not awake till late at night.

—“ Now, Carlos, said Rosalia, producing a dagger, “ hear my oath, on this festive night, and repeat it on your knees.”

I obeyed with frightful astonishment, when Rosalia made me repeat the following words :

—“ We swear everlasting fidelity to the covenant that has protected our union ; no being shall ever divide us ; we will be one in thought and action ; whoever of us proves unfaithful, the other shall haunt and persecute him with nameless torments, nor shall his

his vengeance stop, till his bones are dust, his memory is destroyed, and every offspring or member of his family cut off."

Having made me repeat this dreadful vow, she sank speechless in my arms, and unperceived run the dagger into one of them a little above the elbow, sucking the blood with her own lips. She then repeated the same painful operation upon herself, and presenting to me the bleeding limb, cried: "May such be the mixture of our hearts!"—Soon after the loss of blood made her faint, and having dressed the wound as well as I was able, she at last recovered. This moment was the signal of the same ailment in myself, having forgotten that the same case required on my part, the same remedy I had afforded to her. All grew dark before my eyes, and I felt myself in a momentary torpitude. Rosolia called for help; and the same female attendants appeared, supported, and led me to the castle: I was here put half-senseless on a bed, where a comfortable slumber, which lasted till late in the morn-

E 4 ing,

ing, restored me to my former hardness and spirits.

As I awoke, I found Jago sitting by my side. "I hope," said he, "you are now disposed for a serious conversation. You have made me your real friend, and it solely depends on you to keep me so."

— "Well, my friend, my preserver, what can I do?"

— "Be not so sanguine, listen to me with composure, and learn the drift of the matter. You was yesterday intoxicated; now you ought to be sober. Rosalia was only employed to captivate your senses, but the girl being actually smitten with you, took a different course."

— "Ah, Jago, how thankful I am for thy frankness!"

— "Such are the duties of friendship, and, I hope, you will never be wanting in them towards me. Tell me now, do you really love Rosalia?"

— "I adore her."

— "But will you be true to her?"

— "I have solemnly sworn it."

— "Then

—" Then keep your oath, and learn to merit a heart that thus undeservedly offered itself to you. It was no part of our plan, that you should have enjoyed the rights of a husband so soon. You married sooner than you were worthy ; and enjoyed earlier than you married. These bands will be rivetted much closer, if you once shall acquire a lawful right upon each other."

—" May this be effected by a total submission on my part?"

—" Yes, and by it alone. I regret that I can only talk to you for a short time. My heart is full of important communications, but for the present I am obliged to confine myself to a few words. You will not always understand us, Carlos, yet never doubt, but yield implicit faith and obedience. After we shall have tried you sufficiently, and find you in all emergencies invariably the same, then will your eyes be opened to many operations of our covenant which must forthwith be concealed from your knowledge. You are still, in many points, a stranger to us, nor do we know to what part of your character we ought

to trust more, and to what part less. But be always obedient. You will be drawn into strange situations to put your loyalty to the test, but never deviate from the precepts of our covenant. Obedience is the first step that will make you fit for government. Be always candid towards us, for insincerity or dissimulation—surrounded as you will be by an hundred hands, and watched by an hundred eyes,—will avail you nothing. The covenant condemns no rash idea, but only wants to know and refute it. The sincerer you are, the more shall you be let into the spirit of our society. Papers will be delivered to you, tending to teach you to get acquainted with this spirit, and I am sent hither to make you swear by God and your life, that you will divulge or alienate no part of their contents."

—"I swear it."

—"Here, then, are the papers. You will find in them proper instructions for your conduct. Farewell, my friend; in a twelvemonth we meet again. A Genius will accompany you wherever you go, and his guidance will guarantee your safety."

Jago

Jago now embraced me, and left me with great emotion.

As soon as I had put on my clothes, a stranger entered the apartment, who signified to me, that he had received orders to conduct me out of the cavern. I followed him, in deep meditation, from one vault to another, through the garden and the park. He attended me as far as the hovel in the forest, and then disappeared. I found my horse, plentifully provided with fodder, and fastened to the same place where I had left it. I then mounted, and soon reached my father's villa.

A thousand strange thoughts occupied my mind on my way home. The adventure with Rosalia deeply afflicted me.—“What,” said I to myself, “can there be a destiny more cruel than to be obliged to quit a charming bride after the first embraces, even without being permitted to bid her adieu, or without any other memento than the image of her heavenly charms burning in my soul! Oh! how infinitely cruel is the very first proof of the friendship of that marvellous Cabal.”

Thus

Thus absorbed in deep reflection I was just approaching my garden, when a voice thus welcomed me with a loud laugh : “ Egad, Sennor, you look as white as a winding sheet ! How d’you do ? ” — It was Don Pedro.

—“ Very well,” answered I, “ you will no doubt perceive it.”

As he came nearer to me he became sensible, that I was not in a humor to attend to his raillery.

—“ Why so serious now,” continued he, “ has any thing happened to you ? Between us,” said Don Pedro, “ had you tarried longer, I would have gone armed in search of you.”

—“ And, between us,” said I, “ Don Pedro, I doubt your word.”

—“ It is, I suppose, because I would not creep about with you in the hovel. I will venture to lay a bet, you have seen nothing.”

—“ You are in the right, Sennor. I have been dreaming a long dream, which lasted till now.—But joking apart, what news have you from your lady ? ”

This

This unexpected question quite disconcerted him, he hung his head, wept, and abruptly left me, without reply. I returned to the villa, where my servants, who knew not what was become of me, received me with great joy. Many reports had been circulated owing to my disappearance, and Don Pedro's absence still farther served to magnify them. I did not then take any particular notice of the circumstance of Pedro's being arrived only a few hours before me, which he did not mention. But all this showed a settled plan, from which I might have derived great light on the whole business, had I not been overwhelmed with astonishment and distraction.

C H A P. VI.

I SPENT some weeks, in studying the writings I had brought with me from the forest. But they were written in so mystic and obscure a style, that I had much ado to make out a few ideas of the whole ; yet so sublime were these, that I was quite charmed with

with them. The rest of my time was taken up with rural sports and amusements; a variety of objects diverted my imagination from constantly doating on the fair Rosalia. Only her corporeal attractions hung on my mind, as I had had no opportunity of judging her mental accomplishments.

Don Pedro visited me as usual, and we spent the evenings together in friendly conversation. Often methought I perceived in him a profounder understanding than mine, and a more artful character than he wished me to discern. The deeper I studied the plans of the Cabal, the plainer I apprehended their system of acting, and foresaw their operations. On this account I suspected every word spoken by Pedro. The Cabal had left me some time for repose and the study of their mystic system. Two months had now elapsed, and thinking they had quite forgot me, I was preparing to return to Alcantara, where my family expected me with impatience, when an occurrence happened, which changed the direction of all the subsequent part of my life.

I had

I had not ventured till now, to mention Francisca's name a second time to Don Pedro. He seemed to have heard no farther from her, and the child appeared to make him forget his mother.

One morning he came to my apartments, quite out of breath, to let me know, that his wife had returned.—“ To tell you the truth, said he, “ I am quite indifferent about the matter. She is again melancholy, and weeps for hours ; but as I told her, Don Carlos would much rejoice to see her, she quite melted in tears. What may this signify, Sennor, don't you know ?”

I much suspected the drift of this question, and his eyes seemed eager to provoke an answer.—“ So ?” replied I smiling. “ Indeed, I am glad of it ; she is probably in love with me.”

The indifference with which I uttered this, quite disconcerted him ; and trying to rally his spirits—“ How do you mean ?” resumed he, “ you are very absurd to-day, Don Carlos.”

“ You

" You see, my dear Pedro, I am very busy. Pardon my frankness. I shall be very happy to see you both here in the afternoon. For the present, I must bid you good bye."

I shook hands with him, and he went away quite confused and melancholy.

How is this ? said I to myself. Francisca's come back, yet she bade me an everlasting farewell to her husband, threatening to kill herself !—And the strange and suspicious manner in which the former came to tell me of her arrival !—Either Pedro is a fool or a knave—and who's the dupe ?—Carlos, if he suffer a *friend* to outwit him.

At this moment I went to the window, and found Elmira's name written on one of the panes. Just Heaven ! cried I, who has done this ? At the same moment all the scenes of my wedding-day returned with the most painful sensations to my remembrance. I painted to myself the hour when I lock'd the charming Elmira in my arms, and the dreadful moment, when in those very arms that had opened themselves to make her for ever happy, she sunk, struck by the hand of death.

A dreadful

A dreadful suspicion loaded my heart with an immense burden. Her death was so sudden, so unnatural, and the chief, on my reception into the Cabal, spoke so enigmatically of the case, and alas ! I had been obliged to swear to Rosalia never to love Elmira again. Of what use could be such an oath, if she really was dead ?—And Rosalia seemed so eager, so anxious to press me to it. Should she perhaps be still among the living ? Should they only have wrested her from me, by some artful, natural contrivance ?—And why ?—To chain me with Rosalia's charms ?—My sorrow now burst forth in a flood of tears : How different, said I, were thy charms, Elmira,—thy innocent looks, thy faithful and unassuming endearments ! Never will I forget thee ;— Ah ! hadst thou never left Carlos—how happy would he be now !

Here I took out Elmira's portrait, kissed it with all the ardor of my affection to the once charming original, and passed the remainder of the day in reviving the picture of my past felicity.

Late

Late in the evening Don Pedro and his consort came to visit me. Advancing through the garden, he anxiously seemed to prepare her for a part she was to act. I went to receive them below; Pedro was all friendship; we began a conversation on indifferent subjects, during which I perceived Francisca frequently pausing, probably to recollect her part, and often surprised her in a kind of secret embarrassment, which she carefully strove to conceal.

Her physiognomy characterized by all the features of beauty in distress, made a deep impression on my senses.

Pedro seemed to be aware of it, and played off several jokes. He exhorted us to be more open-hearted to each other. "Have not I a beautiful wife?" said he to me, pressing her fondly in his arms.

"Nobody doubts you, Sennor."

"And is not she fond, too, of her husband's friends?"

Francisca here cast her eyes upon me, blushed, and instantly looked down again.

This must be, thought I, part of the character

raeter she is to perform ; still I felt myself much prepossessed in her favor.

Pedro acted his part in a masterly manner, and had his wife only possessed half his self-command, he must have gained his end. With apparent innocence, yet by the most artful deportment, he put us in an hundred little situations, tending to authorise familiarity between us. We actually became fonder and fonder. But her blushes increased in proportion to the progress of our increasing partiality for each other. In my opinion, she had been directed to put me in confusion, without losing countenance herself, but she was inadequate to the part, and actually began to conceive a liking for me, ere she could possibly be aware of it.

All this I discovered less in herself, than in Pedro. Without losing sight of me, he gave her an hundred fly winks, not to forget herself ; but she indulged the sweet impulse of her heart. At last Don Pedro finding her action rather too faithful a copy of nature, rose and apologized for his not being able to stay any longer. On taking leave, Francisca's eyes

eyes and trembling hand, made me sensible that my conjectures were not unfounded.

How was I to reconcile all these circumstances! That Pedro had a design upon me, was more than visible: but did this design relate to the plan of my brethren of the Cabal?—All this much puzzled me; I was left in the dark, but resolved to be on my guard.

Several days glided away without hearing from my neighbour, nor did I wish to see him myself, or send a servant to enquire in my name. On the evening of the fifth day as I was walking by the brook in my garden, I heard the loud sobs of a woman, very near. It was Francisca. Her moans were artless, and it was impossible for her to have seen me approach. She was sitting on the opposite side of the rivulet, and mixing her tears with the clear stream, which formed a small creek at her feet. Her attitude was so expressive of grief, that tears of sympathy at such a spectacle, gushed involuntarily from my eyes.

She must be in love, said I to myself, and thou art perhaps the unfortunate object. I sat down facing her, and softly called out:

“ Why

" Why those tears Madonna, why so sorrowful?"

She looked around, waking, as it were from a profound dream ; a melancholy glance of her eye had no sooner espied me, than she rose with a scream, and fled to hide herself in the thickest part of the contiguous bushes.

Thou seest now Carlos, whispered I to myself, the unfortunate Francisca loves thee. And what feel'st thou in return ? Nothing but pity !—The fact is, I was unable to judge accurately at that period of my own sensations.

Certain, however, it is, that on her account, I delayed my journey to Alcantara. I cannot say, that I loved her, because my affections seemed to be deeply entombed in Elmira's grave ; but Pedro was a villain, and it was worth while to take her from him. This strange logical conclusion, made me resolve to put off my departure.

Soon after Pedro visited me alone ; he was anxious to show his candour and confidence, but there appeared something forced in every part of his demeanor. I returned his visit ; and

and found Francisca present, but she continued mute, reserved, shy, constantly blushing or startling.—“Are you unwell, Madonna?” said I softly pressing her hand, which was as gently returned with a blush.—“She is quite a valetudinarian,” replied Pedro in her stead; a flood of tears streamed from her eyes, and on her husband’s giving her a wink, she quickly retired.

“I don’t know,” continued Pedro, “what ails the silly creature.”

“Perhaps you treat her too harshly my friend,” returned I, “you never told me any of the particulars of the reception you gave her on her return; may be, it was not quite so flattering as she expected. There’s surely something amiss in this point.”

“I am sure there is not,” answered he with a frown.

“Then, perhaps she, like most of the ladies, is fond of company. Let us give concerts and balls, and take care lest we lose her once more.”

This candid hint made him boldly speak out,

out, and he thought himself perfectly safe, in pushing his plan a step farther.

"No, Carlos, her ailment is none of those you mention."

"What is it then?"

"She is in love."

"In love?" exclaimed I smiling, "that's what I've remarked long ago."

"Have you, indeed? Then I may dispense giving you information."

"There was no occasion for it. It is enough if he knows it, whom it concerns."

"I beg, Don Carlos, you'll give her no encouragement."

"You dream, Sennor, or have taken leave of your senses.—Whom do you mean?"

"You, Don Carlos; yourself."

"Should she be in love with me?"

"To be sure, with you."

"Stuff!—There's news for me!—But, Pedro, you are a wretched wit?"

"No, indeed! I am in full, full earnest."

"You see now, I am in the right. Your suspicions torment her... She sees herself rejected—

jected—what more is wanted to make a wife superlatively wretched?—You should be ashamed Pedro.”

“ I know very well, what I say.—For the present, I’ll hear no more on the subject.”

Thus terminated a conversation, in which each was so fain to have duped the other. I went home soon after, and did not speak to Don Pedro for several days, and when I spoke to him Francisca was out of the way, and I would not enquire for her.

Shortly after Pedro said he was obliged to go on a journey, without telling me whither. At parting, he begged, if I had the least friendship for him, not to forget the warning he had given me. I was not disposed to return a very explicit answer; it seemed as if the name of Francisca discovered itself in all my thoughts, and as if I were not quite pleased with that discovery.

Meanwhile I firmly resolved to avoid visiting her, as long as he should be absent. But I could plainly perceive, that the poor thing loved me, and shared none of Pedro’s artifices, nay even opposed them. I purposed therefore,

therefore, to pay her a visit for the sake of politeness, as she might otherwise have concluded, that I despised her. I determined at the same time, to be extremely polite to her, but keep a respectful distance.

I once paid her a visit in the garden, and after the usual compliments brought the conversation on her husband. "Do you expect him soon back again?" commenced I.

"I rather doubt it; for he gave me orders to shut myself up, and see nobody, without the most absolute necessity."

"He is probably gone to settle some family affairs?"

"It may be so. He told me nothing on the subject."

"You seem rather discontented with him, Madonna. I am your husband's friend, have you any thing to entrust to me?"

"Woe to you! if you be his friend; I have no confidence to impart."

"Ah Francisca! do I deserve such treatment. Nobody can love you as cordially as I do. And why those tears, those half-stifled sighs?"

From this, it will easily be seen, how well I kept my resolution. Francisca turned paler and paler, wept copiously, and after a long pause replied : " If you love me Carlos, spare your tenderness, for I am unworthy of it."

" Who could be worthier, than Francisca ? — Tell me, I conjure you, what oppresses you so much ? "

" Carlos ! I am a faithless, outcast wife."

" Did Pedro say so ? "

" No, Pedro has forgiven me ; but I am again struggling with my heart, and this time, Carlos, I must submit."

" You love ? "

She made no answer.

" You love, Francisca ? " exclaimed I a second time, when half overwhelmed with despair she sunk on my bosom, laid hold of my hand, kissed and then laid it on her bosom. At this moment heaven and earth vanished before me ; all my resolutions fled, and I henceforth considered Pedro as a rascally husband, that ought to lose all that was dear to an honest man. I took Francisca into

into my arms, and imprinted a kiss on her lips, on which she disentangled herself from my rash hands, and rose with an air of dignity.

—“ Yes,” cried she, “ I will be proud of this passion, Carlos ; yes, thou art the only being I love in the creation !”

—“ And wilt thou after such a confession, leave me to myself ?”

—“ Must I not, Carlos ?”

“ No, Francisca. Will you trust your fate to me? Will you clope with me ?

—“ I am ready, Carlos, but in Spain we must not remain ; we should be discovered every where, and they would wrest me from your arms. Take me with you to some lonely retreat beyond the sea, that I may not be forced to act against you !”

—“ Against me ? On what should my apprehensions be grounded ?”

“ The human heart often harbours horrid plans. Trust not, Carlos, even to the best of friends. But I have sworn—” Here she looked timidly all around the garden.

We now agreed to set off together the following night. Meanwhile I made every preparation to accomplish my purpose with safety, and without any danger from pursuits.

Night came, and at the appointed hour, I went to meet Francisca at the window, as it had been previously agreed on. An alarm was given, as if some robbers had attacked the house. I first intended to feign a wish to secure her ; and afterwards go in pursuit of her with Don Pedro's servants, on a different road from that she should have taken. A ladder being put up and the window open, I ascended in disguise and entered the apartment, but Francisca's bed was empty. We went all over the house ; her maids were all asleep, but no where was she to be found.

Certain traces in her closet, showed, that she had been violently carried off. It seemed she had made a long and vigorous resistance ; her bed was quite destroyed, and a great part of the furniture thrown down, and damaged. I was terrified at this spectacle, and

and thought it inconceivable, that the woman who slept in apartments contiguous to her own, should not have heard the scuffle. The servants, whom we waked, were quite astonished to see we had got into their mistress's apartment through a window, and said, they only heard a faint noise, like the whining of a dog shut out from the house to which he belongs. We now proceeded to wake the maids, who still were quite fast. But here the riddle was solved. Nothing, not even pinching could rouse them from their lethargic sleep; and it appeared, as if some opium had been given them. We therefore desisted from all farther attempts to wake them, and they remained in this state all the following day and night.

I immediately judged, that Don Pedro must have carried her off; I knew his artful conduct, and knew also he had a design against me, in which he wished to avail himself of Francisca's assistance, but finding the latter hesitate, he was afraid, lest both of us should ultimately conspire some plot against himself. He considered her as dangerous,

and unable to remove her without raising my suspicions, he clandestinely carried her off. I was quite distracted at the idea of her situation, and enraged to see myself again deceived under the mask of friendship.

For several weeks, I neither heard of the Cabal, nor of Don Pedro. His house was quite deserted, and his domestics, not knowing what was become of their master, ran away.

Meanwhile I continued studying the mystic papers of the Cabal, dived more and more into their system, but secretly watched by their Genius, I durst not provoke the most terrible vengeance of my brethren by unravelling their plans, and such attempt would even at this time cost me my life. Their influence will probably cease, some day, with their existence as a society, and not until then shall I be at liberty to gratify the public curiosity respecting their operations and secrets.

I went to visit my parents and relations at Alcantara, but all their efforts to keep me among them proved abortive. I became indeed,

indeed, unfit for all such company, and the influence of the covenant, made me daily more mysterious and close in my conduct. It was in the middle of spring, when I returned to my rural solitude; I found Don Pedro's house as deserted as I left it, and could not discover the smallest traces of the fate of that unfortunate pair. One day, I found a little key on a side-table, with which I unlocked a bureau and found some of Pedro's writings in it. They belonged to the Cabal, and taking them home with me, I devoted whole days and nights to study them, in hopes of making some important discovery.

Thus occupied, I once sat up till one o'clock in the morning. Every body had retired to rest, and having opened one of the windows of my bed-chamber which faced the garden, to brace my nerves with the aromatic exhalations of the blossom of the lemon trees, I heard a loud knocking at the large gate. I shuddered with fright. What could it be?

All the servants are asleep. The knocking increases in loudness, a cry is heard, the gate opens, and the whole house resounds with strange murmurs. I hear several footsteps in the different apartments, the drawing-room door opens, somebody unlocks my bed-chamber, a slender form in white rushes in, and flies to my bosom.

Half-killed with fright, I had shut my eyes at the being's approach, and durst not open them again. The lights only cast a faint gleam, and the figure was so much muffled, that I could not recognize it. I thought it must be Francisca, and pressed her to my heart. I kissed her lips ; but here I remarked they were not Francisca's. Be-gone woman," cried I, " thou art not Francisca. Who art thou ?"

—“ What, Carlos ! Dost thou not know thy wife, not know thy Elmira ?”

Heavenly powers ! It was Elmira.

I now recognized her in the fire of her embraces, in the mellifluous softness of her voice. But it was no more than Elmira who once charmed me ; that serene, sprightly, celestial

celestial being. A deadly pale distinguished her cold mien, a cloud of melancholy encircled her beauteous eyes; she turned dubious from my embraces, and seemed to ask with all the eloquence of silent anxiety: "Who is that Francisca after whom you thus eagerly enquired?"—I felt my heart in a glow, and endeavoured to pacify her by dint of caresses, but my tongue denied its office, and I was unable to utter a single word.

—"Does thy Elmira," began she at last, "still find thee as tender to her, as when she left thee?"

—"Yes, yes,"—replied I in faltering accents—"this sudden surprize has almost deprived me of my sences—How, my love, hast thou escaped from the tomb? Or art thou but the spirit of my angelic spouse sent to administer momentary consolation to a widowed wretch?"

—"Let this embrace tell thee, fond husband, who I am. There's no such ardor in departed spirits. But art thou, too, as faith-

ful and true to her, as she is to thee? Be sincere, Carlos!"

These words were like a thunder-storm in mine ears. The joy at meeting again was so short, and so soon did it make its transition to the anxieties of jealousy. If the formidable Cabal had wrested her from me, she must also have heard of my infidelity, of my hellish phrenzy. This thought struck me quite dumb for some time, and I finally exclaimed,

—“Cursed, monstrous Cabal! Thou hast robbed me of my all.”

—“What says my love?” continued Elmira, fondly pressing her pale countenance on my cheeks. “Be candid to thy wife.”

—“Alas! Elmira, thou knowest my tender heart. In my arms, I saw thee expire; and before my eyes thou wast committed to the tomb. How could I even dream of such a shameful fraud? Long have I mourned thy loss, and only sought thy image in another fair. Thou never desiredst me not to love again?”

—“I know

—“ I know it, nor could I wish it. But sweet husband, no more! —Now Elmira returns to the possession of your heart. Her fidelity merits it, and her sufferings purchased the boon at a dear rate. I hope my Carlos will disclaim other affections, and find all his wishes gratified in me.”

—“ I certainly will, my sole and loveliest treasure!”

My senses were still absorbed in a conflict between illusion and reality. It was too romantic a case, to see a departed, lifeless wife again in one's arms. I did not wonder at her being taken from me, but was astonished at her return. Or had she eloped? And how had it been possible? I scarce could credit the conviction of my own reason, when I asked her the particulars.

Elmira now turned paler, timidly cast her eyes around the room, and hid herself terrified in my bosom.

—“ Not a word of it at present,” added she with a quavering voice, “ we are not safe for a moment; first let us fly, as far as we are able, and as soon as possible. Hear’st thou,

thou, my love?—Use all possible dispatch, if thou still cherishest Elmira. Ah! they will wrest me from these loving arms!"

I paused for several minutes. I knew, that the Cabal had laid no injunction on me, contrary to this scheme. I promised to get every thing ready for our flight, soothed her alarmed mind with the tenderest expressions, and conducted her to another apartment to take some rest; I fastened the windows and doors, and threw myself with extreme lassitude on my bed.

C H A P. VII.

THUS far my history has been full of misfortunes; but this period opens a field of fresh scenes of horror, which even eclipsed all my hopes and wishes.

I had not been many minutes on the bed, before my half-closed eyes were dazzled by an uncommon brightness, which diffused itself all over the room. I took it for the rising sun, and shut my eye-lids against it.

But

But soon the light became so strong, that I rose, and found every thing, as it were, in a blaze, and large streams of light passing to and fro through the chamber, which at times, emitted numerous sparkling particles, that threw a party colored glaze on every object.

A soft rustling, as if the wind blew through the strings of a harp, now passed by me; I rung for my people, but the string of the bell broke at the first touch. I attempted to leap from the bed, but felt myself held fast by some invisible power. I expected to lose the sight of these terrors in a beneficent swoon, but my senses, already accustomed to similar apparitions, even denied me this last office.

At last the glare changed into a thick mist, and I saw a white form, with eyes darting fury, advance towards me.

—“Who art thou?” cried I.

—“I am thy genius Amanuel,” was the answer in a hollow but soft tone. “I have to warn thee, not to fly with Elmira. Obey me, for I am thy friend.”

—“Who sends thee?”

“The



"The great covenant has consigned thee to my care."

I had a thousand questions to ask, and a thousand objections to urge. But no sooner had I made a grasp to seize the phantom, than all became black darkness around me.

A stillness of death ensued, the piercing dawn made me discover, that every object was in its proper place, and I laid down again. As I rose, I found the door and windows as fast as I had made them, and the natural situation of the room precluded the very idea of secret communication. Deception was impracticable, my whole belief in the non-existence of a spiritual world began to totter, and reason forced me to be persuaded of the presence of my genius Amanuel.

—"Alas," said I to myself, "what can be the object his mission? Must I abandon my beloved Elmira to that cruel Cabal of mysterious strangers? Is this the happiness that has been promised me? Were I not happier, if I had never seen that mystic society, whose inconceivable arts will make my hair turn grey in the blossom of my youth.

I was

I was much indisposed, and went to Elmira whose uneasiness had not permitted her to enjoy an instant's repose. We perambulated the garden, both so happy, and yet so unhappy. Each of us felt the pressure of a secret, and perceived the other's anguish, which made both keep a painful silence.

We returned to the drawing room in silent affliction, and after exchanging a thousand fond caresses, prepared for an important conversation.

—“ I am unspeakably wretched,” began I; “ it is impossible for me to fly with my Elmira !”

—“ Mercy ! Carlos,” replied she in deep consternation, “ why not !”

I now related the adventures of the night ; her blood seemed to run quite cold ; but she insisted on our flight.

—“ Rather plunge a dagger in this bosom,” said she, “ than leave me here. Why wilt thou overwhelm with misery the woman whom thou hast taught to love ; her, that before she knew thee, was so blest in the bosom of fond relations ; her, who dared all for

for thy sake, who bore all for the love of thee?—Be merciful, Carlos, or kill me!"

—"No, Elmira, thou shall never die but with me. Tell me, what shall I do?"

—"Fly—'tis the only resource we have. Fly with me; no flower blooms for us here. The farther we go, the happier shall we be in a distant country."

—"But how shall I escape the invisible arms, that incompass me on all sides? How rescue thee from their grasps? Teach me the way, my lovely spouse. Thou seemest to keep a secret, Elmira, impart it to me, to save us both."

—"No, save us first, else they would murder me in thine arms. O thou shalt know, how they impose on and sport with thy generous heart; how they strive under the mask of friendship, to seduce thee to the foulest and blackest of crimes. All the sublime ideas they offered to thy noble mind, rally in one common centre of wickedness. I found it out; I was to die a second time, but threw myself in thy pitying arms."

—"I am

—“ I am amazed, Elmira!—Should my apprehensions be true?”

—“ I am confident, Carlos, they are. Behold, I know how they seduced thee. I was obliged to witness thy infidelity in Rosalia’s arms ; I was to join the conspirators against thy person—but what is yonder rustling,—Hear’st thou nothing Carlos ?”

—“ ’Tis nothing Elmira ; thy mind is flurried.”

—“ It certainly was a noise I heard ; take me in thy arms, dear Carlos, and there, at least, suffer me to die.”

There actually was a rustling noise coming down a large pier-glass ; but I feigned not to hear it ; and did all I could to ease her agitated mind. Nothing would avail, till I promised her to fly and take her with me with all possible dispatch.

In order to defend her, during the short time I wanted to make the necessary preparations, at least from open attacks, I left two trusty servants constantly with her in the same apartment, till I got every thing in readiness. All seemed auspicious for our approaching

approaching journey, no obstacle came in our way, and I began already to bid defiance to the Genius, who, I thought, would use every means to prevent me from accomplishing my design.

The night, fixed for our departure arrived. We intended going to France, where I hoped to find both happiness and a new home. Elmira and I anticipated already the blissful effects of our removal. Already were the mules put to the carriages, every thing was packed up, and I went with a beating heart to fetch her. It was dark, two waxlights were burning in her apartment, where she sat on the sopha to alter some part of a travelling dress. So light were her spirits, that she began to rally with me on our expedition, and was ready to rise, when looking with a ghastly stare, she cried :

—“ Dear Carlos, I am positive something is making a noise there.” She pointed at a large chandelier fixed to the ceiling.

—“ It is only the stamping of the mules,” replied I ; “ come, let’s be gone.”

—“ No,

—“ No, no, I plainly heard it here, just above us.”

—“ Then let us get out of this cursed room.”

Here I laid hold of her hand, when a pane of a window suddenly burst and fell into the room. A whistling like that of a strong gale rushed through the aperture. Both the candles were blown out, with a strong sound, like some explosion. A ball of fiery matter dropt down, to light them again. At last, both doors flew open, and shut themselves. Something lucid was rustling and moving in the apartment. A chilling current of air blew in our faces, and was succeeded by another almost stifling us with sultriness.

Elmira lay senseless in my arms, but I had strength enough to carry her to the door, and danger made me quite raving. I wished for Amanuel’s appearance, to combat him. I could not open the door, but called for help, from the window. The door was forced open, I carried out Elmira, the horrid whistling followed us, with a noise, as if all the

the furniture of the apartments was dancing at our backs. The chandelier fell down with a tremendous crack, and the house shook, as if there had been an earthquake. All the apartments seemed to be in a blaze, and a frightful rattling pursued us down stairs, to the very door of the carriage.

No sooner had I got into the vehicle, than the whole villa seemed to be illuminated, all the doors and gates creaked, and large stones rolled down from the roof. The servants were almost frightened out of their senses, and we drove off with furious speed.

We soon reached a neighbouring wood. The carriage had hitherto been drawn in full gallop, but now it began to move slower and slower, and not all the exertions of the coachman and the postillion, could make the animals go faster. At last it stopt, the window glass was dashed in a thousand pieces, a fellow in disguise came up, and discharging a horse-pistol into the carriage, I felt Elmira drop dying into my arms!!!—

It is impossible to describe, what I felt at this moment. Elmira bleeding in my embrace !

brace! Her heart palpitated feebler and feebler under my hands, till it entirely ceased. I took the whole for a fantastic sport of the imagination, and wavered between truth and uncertainty. It was not till after a long conflict between contradictory sensations, that I discovered Elmira was no more. Her blood had been rilling over my hands, and when I took off the veil, I found her countenance quite distorted; not a feature was cognizable, her eyes were sunk deep in her head, no moan heaved the suffering bosom, she was like a congealed corpse—My grief was suspended by a glowing desire of vengeance, my tongue was parched and began, as it were, to thirst for blood; methought her fleeting manes demanded no tears, but signal revenge.

A volume of light rushed at the same time upon my mind respecting the proceedings of the Cabal; never had I felt myself thus much the sport of those fatal strangers, never had they so barbarously treated me as their slave. I became sensible that their despotic yoke required, that I should with abject

ject servility, court their approbation for each moment's pleasure I wished to enjoy.—Life was now a matter of indifference to me, and while my thoughts were directed to some immediate plan of revenge, two of my servants on horseback pursued the murderer, who had fled with incredible swiftness. They got up within fifty yards of the wretch, but despairing of taking him alive, one of my faithful domestics fired a carabine at the fugitive, a slug entered his brains, and he tumbled instantly from his horse which ran off without its rider, and when the pursuers came up with their victim they found him quite dead.

Hearing the report of the carabine, I left the remains of Elmira for a moment, and hastened to recognize the assassin. He had a mask on his face, we removed it, but none of us had the slightest knowledge of his person. Having strictly searched him from head to foot, nothing was found, that could lead to a discovery. I ordered the carriage to drive back to the villa, and deposited the sad relics of Elmira in her apartment. After having bolted

bolted and double-lockt all the doors, I proceeded to examine her wounds, that I might be certain of her death. Removing part of her dress, I found that two balls had quite shattered her left breast, and a third lacerated her tender neck ; the blood was all clotted, and every limb rendered unpliant by the chill stiffness of death. I sent for her women to undress her entirely, took myself her clothes into my room to search them at leisure, and as I was turning one of her pockets, a small pocket-book, tied with a lilac-colored ribbon, fell out of it. With eagerness I tore it open, and found, besides the note which I once picked up in the church of the Capuchins at St. Jago, another paquet of writings, which I imagined to be of great moment. Unable to read them then, I put them in a secret drawer of my bureau, and returned the pocket-book where I had first discovered it.

Though the shocking mangled state of Elmira's body made it appear to common understanding, that all the interference of art was useless ; yet I was not satisfied, till every physical remedy had been tried tending to recover

cover animation. But all my cares were in vain. I now gave orders to dress the corpse, and let it lie three days in the same apartment. I had already had one instance of the illusory tricks of the Cabal, and was now resolved to leave nothing undone, to prevent a second deception. I made a secret mark on the body, and inspected it every hour to see if it had not been changed. The explosion of the gunpowder had so much disfigured her whole person, especially the face, that there was not one feature or lineament in it, which resembled those that characterized it when living. Hence it would have been very easy to put another corpse in her place. A scar however was now visible on her forehead, which I had never observed before, and which it would have been difficult to counterfeit.

To be the safer in what I was doing, I sent for some confidential tenants, who did not leave the body for a moment. Three days after, the symptoms of putrefaction growing too strong, the bier was screwed up in my presence, and each screw sealed with my seal;

no attention was spared, to prevent a second fraud, and I assisted myself at the melancholy duty of fitting by the corpse in my own family vault.

No sooner was I come back from those last and pious rites, no sooner had my heart-breaking sorrows been somewhat mildered by a briny flood of tears, than I hastened to the bureau to peruse the papers. They were badly and almost illegibly written, related to uninteresting family affairs, and after a short and hasty inspection I again sealed and put them by.

Night was, by this time, very near, and I expected a visit from my Genius. I ordered some lighted candles to the lodge in the garden, to induce him to come. Provided with two braces of pistols and a sword, I was ready to bid him welcome. I was quite furious, yet waited patiently and with cold blood all night long ; but Amanuel kept away.

I laid three more nights in ambush for him in a secret press contrived in the wall of my bed-chamber, but all my vigils were frustrated and no genius would approach me. I

then took the desperate resolution of meeting the dreadful Cabal in their own repair alone, there to destroy or perish among them.

I was coolly bent on this resolution, and bade defiance to all dangers. Several weeks passed in making preparations, and I considered myself as a dying man. I made a will, delivered it to my friends, and under the pretence of going on a long journey, appointed Don Antonio to the care and management of the villa which had now been given me, and likewise to the rest of my personal and landed property. I concealed a good quantity of poison under my clothes, to escape a long and lingering death, in case the Cabal should seize me alive.

Meanwhile word was brought me, that Don Pedro had returned without his wife. He visited me a few days afterwards, and every trace of human benevolence seemed to be obliterated from his character. He was extremely cool and reserved, and I repaid him his frigidity in fullest measure. Whenever I mentioned Francisca's name, he was mute and melancholy, and if I dropped any inquisitive hints

hints respecting her fate, a few significant looks, and shrugging up his shoulders, were all the answer I could obtain. But when I spoke of the mystic covenant, his whole countenance brightened up, and he seemed to wish to scrutinize anxiously all my thoughts and designs. But I always opposed an uniform and close reserve to his curiosity, till quite disgusted, he discontinued his visits.

The day was now come, which I had fixed on for my departure. Don Antonio was arrived at the villa, and I spent the whole afternoon in taking a tender and affectionate leave of my friends, and spent the evening in parting conviviality with Antonio.

Every body having retired to rest, I took the keys of the garden, went softly down stairs, and climbing over a little wall into the yard where my horses were stabled, I wrenched off the lock from the stable-door, and began to saddle my best horse.

Thus occupied, I felt something jumping about my feet; it was Fidello, my favorite dog. He had known me by the scent, was glad to see me, whined for joy, and made an

hundred starts and gambols. It seemed, as if he felt I was going to leave him for a long time, and would thus bid me farewell. I could not indeed take him with me, without betraying myself. Ten times he jumped up to lick away the tears that were rolling from my face. I had borne every thing with composure, even the last embrace of my Antonio, but this mute parting scene with a dumb animal, made my heart melt in woe. The poor beast!—He surely must have felt my grief. He hung his head so sadly—his whining was so oppressively moanful—perhaps it was the only equanimous friend I left behind me!—

By this time, the pack in the kennel began also to be unruly, and no time was to be lost, if I wished to set off unperceived. I took therefore Fidello by his proffered paw, and fondly stroking his head: “poor Fidello,” said I, “thy master is going. Thou’lt be the last to forget me!” Here, with some difficulty I bolted the stable-door upon him, shut my ear against his anxious scraping, and faithful complaints, opened a back-gate, and rode off galloping on a well known road, which soon

brought

brought me into an adjacent wood of chestnut trees.

C H A P. VIII.

IT was a beautiful moonlight night, when I reached the forest in which the cabal resided. But what was my surprise, to find at day-break that my horse had carried me a quite opposite direction from that whither I imagined to have chosen my way. It was the effect of another enchantment. At sunrise, I saw myself in the charming valley of Placentia, on the river Tago; the river Talavera being on the right, and the town of Oropesa, amidst numberless detached houses, and scattered hamlets and villages on the left. I jogged on between the vineyards and corn-fields which embellish that fertile region, till I arrived at the next village, whose inhabitants were all on foot and dressed in their best attire, to go, as I afterwards understood, to a famous annual fair at Oropesa. The groups of peasants of both sexes loudly diverted themselves

selves with my gloomy and melancholy face, which they judged too unfashionable to appear at a fair. They would not, however, speak to me, before I had wished them a good morning; when, with great avidity they thronged around me, to recount the amusements and wonders of the fair. At last, the men almost disputed with each other, who should have first the pleasure to treat me at the next wine-house.

I could not resist their sincere invitations, and entered several houses on the town-road, to drink, they said, to the pleasures of the fair. The wanton sports of their youths and their engaging brunettes, made my heart heavier at every step. "How happy," exclaimed I, "could he be, that would live amongst you!"

"Why don't you, Sennor?" replied a strong, healthy young peasant, who was conducting his sprightly consort by the arm. "Why not pick out a wife among our girls? None would refuse you; I am sure."

"But who would help me to do your work my good fellow?"

"Every

"Everyone of us will bear you a hand.
Wouldn't ye now do it, neighbours?"

Here the whole crowd answered: "Aye,
aye; and heartily welcome!"

"And thou black-eyed little wanton,"
said the rustic, addressing himself to a fine,
slender brunette more beautiful than the rest;
I see your squinting looks. Would you have
any objection to take this man for your hus-
band?"

Here the cheeks of the ingenuous maiden
covered themselves with a thousand sweet
blushes:

"Don't be such a child, Clara," continued
the hardy ploughman. "You see, Sennor,
she is my wife's youngest sister, and a pretty
girl enough, and though a little saucy at
times, yet a downright good-natured faithful
wench. Why you blush again? Have I said
too much in your favor?"

Here the beautiful brunette modestly ad-
vanced to me.

"Don't you believe him," said she; "I
am quite good for nothing. But if your ho-

nor wishes to wed with me— have no objection."

" Sweet Clara," interrupted I, " I am quite grieved at not being able to accept of so much happiness. My parents are alive still ; mine is a proud family ; and, alas ! I am a nobleman !"

" Oh ! As for that," said the peasant, I am your equal. And the question is whose family is the more ancient and respected, yours or mine ?— Did you never hear of Count Orello ?" added he with a soft whisper.

" Good God !" cried I, " are you Count Orello, who eloped with a young lady, and was afterwards——"

" What ? You know my story, Sennor ? Who may you be pray ?"

I whispered my name in his ear.

He gazed at me with amazement, then turning to his company : " Hark'ee, children," said he, " I am going to fetch something I forgot at the last inn. Go on, never mind me, I'll soon join you again."

They asked what it was, and every one offered to go and fetch it for him. But he only turned

turned and whispered to me:—"Don Carlos, you are a worthy man, but we shall never meet again,"—and disappeared.

The whole company were sorry at his departure, and having waited some time, despaired of his return. "He is sometimes quite down-hearted," said they; what a pity that such a good man should be so melancholy!—Yet he has lands, a comfortable house, an excellent wife, and good children."

Meanwhile I perceived the Count's lady quite bewildered at her husband's departure, and Clara seemed also deeply concerned. The Countess cast some melancholy looks at me, as if she dreaded me as the disturber of her present happiness. I separated purposely from the crowd, and accosting her, asked, what could be the cause of so much distress?

"Ah! Sir," replied she fetching a deep sigh,—"we are very unfortunate! I see, my husband has been so imprudent as to discover our family to you. This does not vex me, because I believe you are a man of honor;—but why did he retire thus suddenly? Why is he not come back?—I know him well;

very recesses of his heart seemed to be in emotion."

" I promise you, Madonna, to keep your husband's communication respecting his family, as a secret buried in my heart. As to his going away so suddenly, I am in a still greater uncertainty than yourself. No doubt, you know the reports that are spread respecting your marriage, and that your husband gave you his hand in defiance of a certain mystic Cabal?"

" You astonish me, Sennor."

" There's no occasion, Sennora; I, too, am one of the members of that formidable society."

" Gracious Heaven protect us then!"

" Away with such fears, Madonna! I am perhaps more the victim of that Cabal than yourself, and that without the least prospect of the remedy that you have taken for your safety."

" I understand you perfectly, Sennor, and hope you will be our friend."

From this moment I observed, that my candor had done me more harm than good,
and

and the lady became visibly more reserved in her conversation. Had I been more circumspect, I might in the critical moment of her flight have searched deeper into the secrets of their history, but now she seemed to evade with singular facility, every captious question, and combated me, as it were, with my own weapons.

On our arrival at Oropesa, I lost sight of the Countess and her children in a crowd, and never saw them again afterwards. The fair was well-attended and remarkable for an hundred entertainments that could not but prove agreeable to the country-people.

Having walked about for an hour, I stopt at last among a group of spectators who very attentively saw a large mastiff dance. The dog having done, his master took a green parrot upon his hand, and asked the bird :

" Tell me, pretty Poll, who is the eldest and who the youngest here ? "

The bird first mentioned the numbers eighty-two and eight.

" And what is their name ? "

He uttered two names, which the whole company with great applause, declared to be rightly guessed.

—“Now tell me, pretty wag,” pursued the show-man, “what nobleman is in the company.” The bird very plainly answered, “Don Carlos de Grandez.” I was quite thunderstruck, and every eye being directed to me, quitted the crowd, remounted my horse, and precipitately galloped out of the town.

“Unhappy Carlos,” said I to myself, “there is no place on earth where thou can’t shelter thyself from thy persecuting fate; no spot, where the arms of those mysterious strangers do not extend to, where they do not catch thee in their snares. How will it then be, if thou fallest into their vindictive hands? What new torments will they invent, to punish thy disobedience; what new arts devise to dupe thee with thy own folly? Believing them in thy reach, thou wilt only grasp the phantom of thy fancy—and power! what will it avail thee? two feeble arms of an enervated frame; against a thousand daring
and

and robust hands ; a dagger against a thousand swords !

“ Thou certainly carriest poison about thee, which would shorten thy sufferings. But hast thou ought to keep off their insulting pity, their placid contempt ? Better were it for thee, to fancy some means of escaping them, instead of going in quest of their infernal cavern with all the madness and ill success of knight-errantry.”

Amidst these reflections I met a traveller in a wood on the confines of the valley of Placentia. We entered into conversation about the forest, the dangers of travelling, and hit at last on the proprietor of the whole district. My fellow-traveller, a plain but talkative man, now informed me, that the owner was a widow-lady, whose husband had on a sudden disappeared. After a thousand fruitless researches, she was still left in the cruel uncertainty of what was become of him, and resolved to spend her life to mourn his loss in solitary retirement.

Night drew on apace ; no inn was near ; and my companion telling me, that the widow

dow received every traveller, however mean and distressed with the most amiable hospitality; her boasted virtues and the tale of her misfortunes made me determine to pay her a visit, and I took leave of my informant on a cross-road.

He showed me the way to the lady's castle, whose outskirts I reached at twilight. The gardens were beautiful, embellished with statues and water-works, and the mansion itself had the magnificent grandeur of a palace. Tying my horse to a tree, I ascended a flight of marble steps, entered the hall, which was entirely deserted. I then went through several apartments, most sumptuously furnished, and still nobody came to speak to me. I stopped in a fourth apartment to look at some paintings, when a person in black, whom I took for a servant, opened another door, without lifting his eyes from the ground. I spoke to him, he made no answer, and ere I could turn to follow him, had vanished from my sight.

"By Heavens! Carlos," exclaimed I, "this exceeds all thou hast hitherto lived to see."

At

At these words I opened the door, by which the servant came out, and entered a closet hung in black, where a lady in sable weeds, was kneeling before a silver crucifix and two lighted tapers. On my entrance she beckoned me, not to disturb her in her devotion.

Having continued her pious exercise about ten minutes longer, she rose, wiped off some tears from her large and soft-beaming blue eyes and inviting me to follow her into a drawing room:

—“Who are you, Senno?” asked she, “what service can I render you?”

—“A straying wanderer Madonna,” replied I, “that craves the protection of your hospitable roof for a night.”

My dress, which was rather disordered and looked shabby owing to the dust of the roads and a shower in which it had got wet, made her survey me with particular attention.

—“Pardon me, Senno;” resumed she, “I am at a loss in what manner to entertain you. May I make bold to ask your name?”

Having

Having satisfied her enquiry, and pretended, that a desire of getting acquainted with the world was the motive of my journey, she informed me, that she would give orders to her servant to assign a fuit of rooms for my reception, but could not think of consenting to my leaving her castle for some days.

Having thanked her for such unmerited kindness, she led me to a saloon with an invitation to sup with her. Spending our time in agreeable conversation, a genteel and handsome young man made his appearance, after whose arrival, an excellent supper, consisting of all the dainties of the season was served. The young gentleman appeared to be universally accomplished, and methought by their looks, they harboured a tender attachment for each other. Thus we spent several days, and the widow being alone in the day-time, I generally had the pleasure to accompany her in taking her morning and afternoon's walk in the gardens.

C H A P. IX.

I COULD hardly defend myself from falling in love with the charming widow, and our intercourse had already grown so intimately familiar, that without offending her modesty, I had been permitted to ravish several fond kisses from her blooming cheeks.

One evening she thus related her story :

" My family is one of the most ancient in the kingdom. Five years ago, I married the man who was the choice of my heart. Fond of rural seclusion I retired to live with him in this castle. Wholly occupied with our loves, we promised each other in the happiest hours of sweet dalliance, never to cease our intercourse, even if death should part us. Soon after he died, and regularly returns hither every night."

—“ I am astonished, Madonna, at what you tell me.. Was there no third person present when you exchanged this vow?”

—“ No.

—“ No. We received no visits in this retreat. My husband kept the youth whom you saw the other night at supper, to superintend and manage the concerns of our estates, and the young man was just absent at that time for several weeks.”

—“ Wonderful! — And does he come every night?”

—“ He never misses.”

—“ And what does he say to you in those visits?”

—“ He never speaks, and only sits down at the foot of my bed.”

—“ Did you never venture to touch him?”

—“ Never.”

—“ Have you never tried to discover, whether the whole is not a mere cheat?”

—“ I have tried every thing, Sennor. My room is lockt and bolted; and there is no secret entrance.”

—“ Incomprehensible! — But hear me, Madonna; I am a man of spirit and resolution. Let me but once try my own means to make a discovery!”

—“ No,

—“No, Sennor; I value your life too much, to expose it to such danger.”

—“I don’t mind my own life, but yours Sennora! Pray permit me to make one attempt.”

She used every persuasive to make me desist from the enterprize. After many expostulations I ultimately prevailed on her to comply with my request. Having previously agreed on the deepest silence during the transaction, and made her promise to admit me a little before midnight to her bed-chamber, the next night was chosen for the execution of my design. I made every preparation for my safety, for which I deemed a strong cuiras, which I had worn ever since my projected flight with Elmira, and a sharp dagger to be quite sufficient.

The appointed night came. Having supped together, and endeavoured to keep off fear by wit and pleasantry, we parted laughing and joking about eleven o’clock, and I withdrew to my bed-room, where to save appearances from the servant who slept in a chamber not far from mine, I feigned to go

to

to bed, blew out the candles, drew the curtains, and began to snore.

At last the castle-bell struck half past eleven, when I gently stole from my bed, and tript on my toes to the widow's apartment, the door of which was on the jar. On my entrance, she was in the highest agitation, and I could scarce keep her from swooning in my arms. I made use of all the eloquence I was master of, to animate her to courage. It was a strange conflict between curiosity and fear, feminine softness and enthusiasm, shame and expectation. She seemed both to dread for and be afraid of me.

It could not be denied, that her situation was then rather critical, and had she at first felt the whole extent of its danger, I doubt whether I should have been able to persuade her to such a measure. A stormy night which even familiarizes the bodies of two sympathetic souls; the opportunity, which deprived her from every assistance, the negligence and derangement of her dress, equal danger and equal apprehensions, might well have shaken the virtue of more solid characters.

ters than ours. For my own part, I do not hesitate to confess, that scarce one half of all this, would have been enough to stimulate my senses, had they not already been too much roused by the danger I was in.

The dreary hour of midnight now drew very near. The widow, according to agreement, took her seat in a corner of the chamber, and I occupied her place in bed, attentively watching the least motion or stirring around me.

Twelve o'clock strikes. The drops of a heavy shower beat loudly against the windows; the very air of the room seems agitated, and the bedstead and all the woodwork begins to crack. In a few minutes the moon darting in her silver beams, enables me to distinguish better every object around me. Of a sudden the curtains of the bed are drawn open, and a muffled figure, slowly advances and takes place at the foot of the bed. It waved one hand, as if it wanted to speak, but did not utter a single word; and having waited about a minute in expectation of hearing something, I rose upright in the bed.

At

At this movement which was rather attended with a kind of impetuosity, the figure quickly startled and drew back, and by the cast of the moon-light I could plainly descry its face to be that of a man. This circumstance made me somewhat bolder, for I thought it was impossible to take a ghost by surprise. When the apparition found me get out of bed, it suddenly attempted to make its retreat, and even uttered an ejaculation, which I thought I knew by the sound, and fancying it rather strange in the mouth of a spirit, I rushed at the being, and was convinced in this very moment, that it was a man I had to do with. He drew a dagger and attempted to thrust it through my heart, but the cuiras rendered me invulnerable. I seized my spectre by the waist and we both fell wrestling to the ground; the conflict continued a long while, during which the apparition made several unsuccessful passes at me with his dagger, but finding myself in danger of being overcome at last, transported with rage, I drew my own poniard to save my life, and two stabs put an end to the combat.

My

My antagonist uttered a long groan and immediately expired.

The widow now fetched a lighted taper, we unmuffled the remains of the vanquished spirit, and looked into his face. What was our astonishment!—We recognized him to be the same handsome young man, in whose company I supped, the first night of my sojourning at the castle.

The moment my surprize would permit it, I fixed my eyes on my fair hostess. A crowd of various passions alternately pictured her countenance with the strongest features of unexpected sensations; there was surprise, curiosity, fear, love, grief, and indignation, which ultimately prevailed. Every minute my sanguine expectation of receiving her best thanks for having so generously put my life at stake, was wound up higher, till it evaporated in utter disappointment. Having for some time held the candle in a kind of mute torpor over the dead body, she set it on the floor, fell on her knees, and tenderly embraced the remains of her adventurous Adonis.

So far from being pleased with the sight of this

this spectacle, I retired from it to the window. At last she rose, and staring at me with a look of melancholy coldness, exclaimed: "There's another scene of blood!" and left the chamber without deigning to speak another word to me, her deliverer.

Confounded I went back to my apartment, dubious of the issue of this affair. I waited the morning, with unspeakable uneasiness.

At breakfast-time, I repaired to the Lady's drawing room, but it was shut against me. Soon after, one of her women brought me word, that her mistress could not speak to me that morning. My breakfast was then brought me, with the following letter sealed:

" You have undesignedly deprived me of
" all my happiness. This may be enough
" for you, but never will I see you again.
" Pardon me, the request of dispensing
" henceforth with your presence; it comes
" from a distressed woman who ought to be
" the object of your pity, and whom you
" ought to forget for ever."

The

The first emotion I felt was indignation, and I wrote these lines on the back of the Letter:

“ You must know the designs I could have, in exposing myself to danger, to deliver you from your own. You know the affection and attachment I felt for your person, but you also should know the pride that guides my actions. If chance does not bring us together, you shall never see me again. I hope you will forget the unfortunate man, whom you unjustly load with vexatious reproaches.”

This reply I forwarded immediately by her waiting woman, in whose hands I also pressed some pieces of gold, and having got my horse saddled, left the castle, without casting a single look of regret behind me.

C H A P. X.

I DIRECTED my route to Madrid, where I arrived six days after I left the widow. Here I resolved to spend all the ready money and bills I had brought with me from my estate, in mirth and joviality. I soon launched into dissipation, amidst a large circle of nominal friends, and passed near a twelvemonth in a continual round of concerts, masquerades, balls, and at the first gaming tables of the metropolis. I had always been on my guard against the plans of professed gamesters, but fate would have it, one unlucky night, that my money should melt in the hands of some of that rascally tribe. I rose from the phar-table with no more property than would suffice to defray my necessary expences for another week. Overwhelmed with shame and despair, I made preparations to leave Madrid, where all my effects were sold to pay the debts I had contracted. I intended to return to

to Alcantara, and set out on my journey like a poor beggar on foot.

As I was pre-determined when I secretly left my estate under the care of Don Antonio never to apply to him for any remittances, nor let him know the places of my temporary residence, self-love and the mortification I now felt, made me still more averse to such a measure to extricate myself from difficulties. I set out from Madrid, with a very slender purse, which at the end of a few days journeys, decreased very rapidly, and threatened me with every kind of the most humiliating distress. I resolved therefore to buy a guitar, before my stock should be entirely gone, and knowing a great number of the most favourite popular ballads and songs by heart, I exercised my musical talents in every little town, burgh or village I passed, and met every where with tolerable success, especially among the women, whose ears I took care to treat with such songs, as I thought would best suit the temper of their mind. Thus, poor and contented, I got to within the distance of a few leagues from my villa, and in

the humble character of a ballad-singer, might easily have traversed all Europe. I took up quarters at an inn of a neighbouring village, where a good number of swains and shepherdesses came to dance to the tune of my instrument.

In the height of their glee I felt something pull my coat from behind; and looking round, perceived it to be a large, ugly and half mangy cur. He jumped at me, and I had much ado to keep off his caresses; at last he whined, and however altered his form was, yet I immediately recognized him by his voice to be Fidello, the faithful companion of my infancy. But what a change was there in the poor animal! He had lost one eye, his ears were mangled, and tied with a cord round his neck, he now was the guide and servant of a ragged beggar. Irritated at the ingratitude of those, who to reward his long and faithful services had turned him off, I could not help shedding tears of indignation. I resolved never to part with him more. On enquiring of his then master, I not only learned poor Fidello's story, but also part of my own. It appeared,

a groem

a groom had sold the dog to the pauper for a trifle. "Don Carlos de Grandez," pursued the mendicant, "is gone abroad and nobody knows whither. Don Antonio lives in great splendor at the villa, and does not imagine, that he will ever be brought to an account for it. A strange Lady with a little boy is with him, but whence she came, is unknown. She seems to live very modest and retired, and is often seen weeping in the bowers of the garden."

After racking my brain with a thousand conjectures about that strange Lady with the boy, who appeared so sad and melancholy while Don Antonio was so wondrous merry, and that most probably at my expence too; I formed the plan of going to reconnoitre them in my disguise as a vagrant ballad-singer. It was not difficult to put it in execution, as my long beard, and uncombed hair, my sun-burnt face, and my mean and shabby-grown coat, with foul linen made me look rather like a vagabond or a thief, than like myself. I redeemed my Fidello from the beggar that

H 3. back,

back, a large club in one hand, and leading my dog by a dirty string with the other, I set off for my villa the next morning.

At noon I was close to the wall that enclosed my garden. I came much prepossessed against Don Antonio, but at every step which led me nearer to the villa the unfavourable impressions my mind had received, began to diminish. I found the garden altered very much for the better, and every thing bore an aspect of taste and improvement.

Apprehending lest Fidello should betray me, I set him loose, and he flew with the velocity of the wind through the principal gate of the edifice, without seeming to take farther notice of me. Finding the little garden door unlocked, I slyly stole in, and crept on to a thicket, which led to one wing of the villa, and there laid for some time in ambush. Soon a little boy passed by me, playing with a large Newfoundland-dog. A Lady soon followed him, accompanied by a gentleman. It was Francisca with Don Antonio. She seemed more distressed and grieved than ever, and my friend walked by the side of her, apparently despairing

despairing of relieving her depressed mind by his conversation. After several turns in the garden, during which I could hardly refrain from discovering myself by embracing them, I saw them return to the house, and quitting my snug hiding place, resolved to follow.

On my approach, I heard poor Fidello howling most lamentably, probably owing to some blows he received. This reception of my poor dog naturally made me somewhat anxious about my own. At last Fidello perceiving me from the yard, runs in full cry into the garden to demand, as it were, my protection. Some of the valets, all new faces, pursue him with cudgels and several other dogs. One of the former discovering me, cried : " What business has this damned beggar here? Let's thrash him out of the premises."

No sooner had this suggestion been given than the merciless knights of the shoulder-knot saluted me with a volley of stones by way of a prelude. I found myself in the most awkward situation, and was quite at a

loss how to escape their cudgels or the pursuit of the hounds. So great was my rage, that had I had fire-arms about me, I believe I could have murdered them all. At last I am hemmed in from all sides, the cudgels are brandished over my head, and pity alone seems to prevent them from letting the hounds loose upon me. Poor Fidello, maled with blows, and lacerated with bites, still continued to exert his voice and teeth to defend me, but it was too unequal a match !

"Rascals," exclaimed I half despairing, "don't you know Don Carlos, your master?" "Curse the fellow, he's mad!" replied one of them, while his witticism was received with a peal of broad horseLaughs. "Only fetch me Don Antonio," continued I, "and he'll soon make you repent your insolence." Another fellow now had the temerity to spit in my face. "What, don't you see, cries a third, it is a proud, drunken Hidalgo?" "Well," said the fourth, "I'll bring him an answer from master. Let him alone, till I come back." Shamming to go to the villa, he presently returned, and applying

applying his cudgel vigorously to my back, called out: "Don Antonio begs his compliments and sends thee this!"

I made a desperate resistance, but was obliged to yield to superior numbers; my guitar was beat in splinters on my back, at last I repulsed them twice. Poor Fidello was engaged on his part with the hounds, but soon remained dead on the field of combat. I think my fury would have made me triumph over the villains, two of whom I had already completely disabled from continuing the fight, but perceiving the gardner and his laborers come to their assistance, I thought it time to decamp, and jumping over a broad ditch, found refuge from their attacks and pursuits in a little wood.

Here I fell sore and exhausted to the ground, covered with wounds, blood and contusions, and every bone aching from the treatment I had experienced. "A fine reception," exclaimed I with bitterness, "from my own people." What a wonderful change is there in every thing! Being finally relieved from these painful reflections by the conso-

latory thought of my distress being only fictitious, I resolved to go to Alcantara, in hopes of being avenged of Don Antonio, to whose perfidy I began to attribute the usage I had met with on the part of his scoundrel domestics.

C H A P. XI.

I ARRIVED in three days at Alcantara, where the door of my father's house was opened to me by my trusty servant Alfonso, who on my sudden disappearance from the villa, had gone thither to wait for my return. He stared at me for some minutes, then recognizing me clapped his hands, exclaiming :—“ Good Heavens ! What a trim do I meet you in, my Lord ! Has any thing happened to you ?” I shook the honest fellow by the hand, and told him not to be uneasy on my account, as I would tell him every thing at a convenient time. He now informed me, that my father had been dead for some months, and grieved very much at the

the idea of having lost his son. He added that my mother had been left sole heiress of his fortune, and was still quite downcast owing to the double loss of a husband and a beloved son. I flew immediately into my mother's arms, who was quite transported with joy at my return. Having related my adventures in the garden of the villa, she shook her sides with laughter but, on seeing the wounds and contusions I had received, she soon altered her tone. The dogs and the cudgels had put me in such a condition, as obliged me to keep my bed a whole week.

Don Fernandos di Albengha, a young nobleman whom I had early learned to love and esteem as a neighbour, a friend and a playmate came to congratulate me on my re-appearance, and related to me, that since I left the villa, Francisca returned to her husband's house, and that Don Pedro disappeared shortly before her arrival. He added, that he had frequently conversed with Francisca, but she seemed very shy of honoring him with her confidence, though

H 6 from

from the close connexion between her and Don Antonio, he had reason to suppose the latter fully acquainted with the particulars of her case. He farther observed, that Don Antonio had improved the revenue of my estates by one half to what it formerly was, and concluded with advising me, to give notice both to him and Francisca, of my return to Alcantara.

I followed this advice, and soon saw my worthy friend with Francisca at my mother's to bid me welcome. They both received me with rapture, anxiously asked how I did, and were astonished at the paleness of my face and the bruises which still were discoverable in it.

Don Antonio's servants stood quite thunderstruck at my appearance, and began to dread for the consequences of the assault they had committed upon me. Their master perceiving their embarrassment insisted upon knowing the reason of it, when I informed him of the whole transaction, interceding at the same time in behalf of the confounded varlets, who came on their knees to beg my pardon,

pardon, which I very readily granted. But all this would not satisfy Don Antonio ; though I used every means to palliate their conduct as the result of an excessive zeal in what they thought their master's interest, he was inflexible, and ordered them to quit his service that very instant, as he would not feed and encourage a set of barbarous miscreants, who had had the assurance of maltreating a person in the garb of poverty, because he desired to speak to him. He then instantly dismissed them, warning them against similar misdemeanours in future, and protesting : that had it not been for my generous intercession they should not have got off so easily, as he would have delivered them up to the correction of the police.

I lost no time to obtain the desired éclaircissements respecting the fate of Francisca. But Don Antonio was as much in the dark on this subject as myself, and Francisca treated me with the same mysterious reserve. I also perceived, that her former fondness for me had been transferred to my friend, who seemed to be rather indifferent about it.

They

They both remained with me for a week, and returned afterwards to the villa. Having passed two months more at Alcantara, during which I received the congratulatory visits of all the nobility of that city and its environs, I prepared to set out for Paris, whither two of my friends, Don Fernandos and Don Bernardo had already preceded me.

After a short and prosperous passage I reached the famous port of Marseilles, where I spent several days to view the beauties of the city and its environs. Returning one night with Alfonso who had accompanied me to town, we lost our way on a cross-road, and it being already midnight, I went to knock at a little cottage to ask accommodation for the night. A window in the first story being half open, and a light in the room, I resolved to knock at the door, to demand the hospitality of the owners, whose affability to strangers, like that of all the inhabitants of that part of France, had been described to me in a very flattering manner.

No

No body answered. I knocked once more, when, no answer being returned and hearing somebody cough, I opened the door and entered the parlor.

A young female was sitting at the farther end of the room, busied with needlework. Her dress was that of a person rather above the common sort, and the place itself exhibited traces of neatness and elegance. Lifting her eyes from a picture that hung before her to recognize the nightly intruder, she uttered a loud shriek on casting the first glance on me ; and—to my unspeakable surprize and happiness—I found it was my adored Elmira !!—I fell at her feet; she rushed into my arms ; heaven and earth fled from our entranced sences; it was the grand and sublime moment of meeting again !

“ For Heaven’s sake !” said I recovering from the first transport occasioned by this inconceivable adventure,—“ is it thee, my Elmira ? How camest thou to rise again from the eternal darkness of the grave ? How camest thou hither ?”

—“ Yes,

—“ Yes, Carlos, it is me.”

—“ Ah! dare I believe it, that I hold thee again in my arms? How can I hold thee fast enough, for fear of thy dying a third time? Behold, my love, here is the handkerchief, with which I caught the blood which streamed from thy deadly wounds by my side in the carriage. I have had it about me ever since.”

Elmira beheld both me and the handkerchief with amazement.

—“ What say you, Carlos? I—streaming with blood by thy side in the carriage!—Indeed, I don’t understand you!”

—“ What? Have you forgotten all!—How we escaped from the Genius? How these hands carried you to the carriage, to quit the villa for ever?—How a pistol shot made you expire in a few minutes?”

She looked at me with a smile of bitter sorrow.

—“ Poor Carlos!—Joy has deprived you of your senses! Do you recollect what you have just spoken?”

—“ What?

—“ What ? Should I have been deceived again?—No, Elmira ; tell me candidly, don’t you recollect none of the particulars I have mentioned ?”

“ Not a syllable of the whole, my dear Carlos !”

—“ Then this is the blood of an impostor !”—Here I threw down the handkerchief.

—“ If your senses are not disordered, it certainly must be.”

Thus the morning came amidst mutual raptures. We had a thousand things to say to each other, but our eagerness made us impart nothing. Never was language so poor, never reason so lost in amazement.

—“ Here then,” exclaimed I awaking, “ shall be the end of my miseries ! May Providence complete her work, and preserve thee to my faithful arms.”

—“ Ah ! Carlos,” returned she, “ we shall this day celebrate a double meeting. I know your story, and hope you will spare me the recital of its grievous and aggravating circumstances. You have been insidiously and basely

basely led astray. But I escaped from the monsters, in the most dangerous moment, and just as they thought to have entirely secured my person, I fled to this foreign land, with no other property than your portrait and a few rings and other jewels. Their produce was more than enough to purchase this humble cottage, a little garden, a meadow, and some live stock, which has hitherto served for my support, and which these hands, whose whiteness and softness you will no more have reason to admire, have done their best to procure."

—“Formerly, Elmira, these hands were the witnesses of your beauty, but they are now dearer to me as the signs of your virtue. Even at the altar I did not embrace them so fervently as I now do.”

At these words my faithful Alfonso who, to leave us undisturbed, had passed the whole night in an adjacent penthouse to take care of our horses, entered the room, and with tears of sincere gladness bedewed the hands of his recovered mistress, who received his homage with suitable benignity.

The

The morning was beautifully serene, and Elmira showed me the whole of her new premises, which respiration neatness and simplicity, blended with elegance. She had also purchased a select collection of good books, and a fine guitar stood in the room neither covered with dust nor out of tune. She had received a young country girl into her service, whom she treated rather as a companion than a menial dependant. This girl had acquired such a degree of cultivation by the example and conversation of her mistress, as to prove worthy of such distinguished treatment. Her mind was well stored with good sense, and she often shortened or rather charmed away the tedious hours of Elmira.

We took breakfast in the garden, in a large bower of lilac-trees, whose shades protected us from the sultriness of the day, and the coolness of the evening. Every spot in this little garden was tastefully laid out, and all the favorite flowers were collected in romantic groups.

"All this," exclaimed Elmira with a kind of enthusiasm, "becomes henceforth the conjoint

joint property of my Carlos. But behold, this rose tree here, I cannot share with you."

—" And why not, my sweet Elmira?"

—" Because it is not my own."

—" Who, then, is the fortunate being, that can claim such a property in this sacred place?"

—" If you will promise me beforehand, that you will love him but half as tenderly as I do, I'll procure you his acquaintance."

—" What a glow in your eyes ! What damask blushes on your fair cheeks ? Dearest Elmira, is there any one besides me, that can participate in thy love and affection ?"

—" None, that will not steal likewise part of your heart from your fond Elmira. Promise me first of all to love him as well as me?"

—" My confidence in you knows no bounds. Here take my hand. Your virtue can cherish nobody that ought not to be dear to me also."

Trembling with joy and impatience, she conducted me back to the house, and nimbly flew up stairs before me. She opened a closet which

which I had not observed, and looking back, whispered to me: "Softly, softly, Carlos, he is asleep still!"

She took me by the hand, led me to a bed, and opened the curtains—O Heavens what a spectacle to my sight! A beauteous little boy, gently slumbering as on a bed of roses, rocked by some sweet dream, laid here with one half of his fair frame exposed to my admiring eyes! My amiable consort clasping her arms around me, and reposing her blushing countenance on my bosom, lisped to me: "Remember the few blissful hours of my bridal state at St. Jago! This is the fruit of our loves! It is thy son, Carlos! He shall share thy heart with me!"

I recognized my image in his face, and his sable-black eyes as he awoke. His innocent and contented mien seemed somewhat ruffled at the presence of a stranger. He then stretched forth his little arms with a smile of confidence to his mother, who loaded him with embraces. "Dear Mamma," cried he, on my giving him the first tender welcome, "is this

this Papa? You always told me he would love me very much on his return."

Many live to see and feel much. But who that has not felt it, can express the rapture with which a parent receives the offspring of his love, and reads again in his infantine face, the moments of chaste delight that ushered it into being? Eloquence shrinks from the task, and the harmony of two wedded souls rivets itself faster, in the conviction of their being but one.

The day elapsed in forming plans and making arrangements for our future system of housekeeping. I solemnly promised Elmira, never to quit this charming retreat as long as her presence should embellish it.

C H A P. XII.

THUS I had spent near four months in all the charms of rural occupation and retirement. I hoped yet to enjoy full as many years as I had counted days in this blessed state; but no human happiness is of unimpeded

unimpeded duration. Elmira, I soon perceived, to be in a lingering, sickly condition, the consequence of her former child-bed, and her disorder, which in defiance of all remedies, rather augmented than diminished, cost me many a tear—many a sorrowful hour. Herself was but too sensible of it, and the rapid decline of her health, pierced only the more visibly through all the efforts she would make, to conceal it from me. Often did I rouse her from the irresistible gloom that overcast the blossoms of her youthful days, but, alas! I only roused her to relapse the next moment the deeper. The choice she made of her books in the little library, grew more serious and melancholy every day, and her guitar, inanimate to festive lays, resounded only the heart-breaking strain of elegiacs and funeral dirges.

This is also the reason, why I studiously avoided all questions relative to her story since our parting. She never seemed to elude any opportunity to dwell on its details, and would frequently recount some of them of her own accord—but then, her heart seemed so full that

I imme-

I immediately sought to bring the conversation on another topic, which less affected her. At last she said to me in one of her woeful moments : " Dear Carlos, those hours which afforded me leisure from the beginning of my solitude, have been applied to write out my history, and you will once find it in a little case among the rest of my papers." — From this time, I dreaded nothing so much, as the word that could drop the least hint at the opportunity of informing myself of those secrets.

It behoves me, however, to state here, that although Elmira had written many letters to me to come and join her, they had all been intercepted, probably by the inconceivable influence of that horrid Cabal, of which I am going to relate another wonderful instance. I never knew that Elmira had a brother, till my sweet little Amados once brought me a ring, which he fetched from one of the rooms above stairs. It was of gold, quite plain, and had the name Emanuel engraved on it. Elmira surprised me looking at it, wrest it with some violence from my hands, kissed and

and pressed it to her bosom, lifted her eyes to Heaven, and exclaimed: "Alas ! My poor brother!"

— "Your brother ! my dear ?—" answered I with astonishment.

— "Yes, indeed, my brother, my unfortunate brother, who became the victim of that horrid society, whose baneful schemes we have hitherto but half evaded. Alas ! my whole family was left to destruction by those monstrous barbarians !

At this moment I thought it would not be trespassing the laws of prudence and discretion to intreat her to give me an account of the whole business, which she did as nearly as possible in the following words :

— "Till my twelfth year, I had two brothers living ; the younger, a hot and fiery youth, devoted himself to the navy, and distinguished himself on every occasion by his daring spirit, but was soon carried off by a cannon-ball in an engagement with a piratical ship of Algiers. Emanuel, my elder brother, destined to be the prop of our name and family, remained after my father's demise,

with my mother and me, on one of our estates. He was free, liberal, friendly, brave, the support of our house, and the boast and benefactor of all his dependants.

" Fond of social pleasure and joviality, he gathered around him a large circle of friends and acquaintances, who would not only spend the summer with us, but even stay part of the winter. Among them was a certain Don Pedro Nunez.

" This man was one of my brother's bosom-friends, but at the same time a consummate picture of artifice and hypocrisy. He succeeded by a thousand designing means, to alienate my brother's heart from the bosom of his family, and to disgust his mind with the still comforts of domestic life. Having plunged into a ceaseless round of follies and dissipations termed fashionable, he shunned the sober delight of our own conversation, and often was absent from us for many weeks together.

" Fortunately for us all, my father had appointed my mother sole heiress by his will, reserving only an annuity for my brother, the increasing

increasing or diminishing of which solely depended on her own pleasure. Thus by putting him under restrictions, she certainly circumscribed his numerous excesses, but made him at the same time, conceive a mortal hatred against her; and nobody interfering to effect a reconciliation between them, shocking scenes naturally ensued. Under these circumstances I kept myself as much as possible upon the passive, comforted my mother, but all my efforts to appease, mend or reclaim Emanuel not only miscarried, but even threatened to prove dangerous in case of perseverance on my part. He began to consider me as an accomplice leagued against him:

“ Soon we discovered the cause of this unnatural conduct, which could indeed not remain concealed! It was a girl, Don Pedro’s intimate acquaintance, and perhaps one of the most wanton, cunning and malicious creatures under the sun. It could not be denied, that she was handsome, but making her charms the instrument of her dark and villainous machinations, she completely undid

my brother, among whose faults vanity and self-love were not the smallest. Constantly habituated to her dangerous company, he became gloomy and melancholy whenever he was absent from her but for an hour, and his frantic passions would then break loose in such symptoms, as made both my mother and me tremble for our safety.

" It was plainly visible in his whole deportment, that his mind hung brooding over some dark purpose, to execute which his resolution seemed to stagger. He was vexed at being kept in bounds by the salutary measures of maternal prudence ; and to have no other resource than her property to supply his imaginary wants, filled him with despair. His soul had gradually been betrayed from levities into crimes, and several hints, too, had actually been given him with proffered means of assistance, to enable him to get all our fortune into his own hands. His creditors teased him night and day with their importunities and menaces ; he knew of no medium ; his pretended friends shammed poverty ;

ty ; and he began to wander from one plan of atrociousness to another.

" In my mother's bed-chamber there also slept her waiting-woman. The latter is wakened one night by a noise in the apartment. My brother enters with a candle in one hand, and a large clasp-knife in the other; pale, disfigured, agitated, and almost incognizable. He advances to my mother's bed, lifts the murderous steel, and after a momentary pause, throws down the knife with remorseful indignation, bursts into tears, sets down the candle, kneels at the bed side, kisses my mother's hand, opens a window, and in an instant, flings himself into the yard. The waiting-woman, who had hitherto been struck dumb with fear, utters a cry; the whole house is alarmed, but too late; — Emanuel's body lies dead on the ground, with part of his brains dashed out by his side.

" Our grief at this shocking catastrophe may easily be conceived. My mother soon followed him; and I, too, found myself for some time on the brink of the grave. On her death-bed, I promised her never to speak

of this dreadful scene, and have kept my promise to this hour. I soon after was informed, that my unfortunate brother had been enticed to be one of the horrid Cabal, whose barbarous decrees I have never yet ceased to bewail."

Here Elmira concluded the mournful tale.—"Was this," said I to myself, "thy friend Don Pedro, who always attempted to influence thy passions?" I could not help thinking, that he intended to make his wife play the same part with me, which he had made the pretended enamorata act with the unfortunate Emanuel. It was he too, that accompanied me to the hovel in the forest, to deliver up, as it were, his victim with security, and who secretly stole away afterwards, to elude every discovery which chance might have thrown into my way, and which, in case of the least mistake, would certainly not have escaped my penetration. The mystic tenor of every other part of his conduct, as well as the real nature of his relations to Francisca, I resolved to leave to time and more favourable circumstances.

But

But what sufferings did still await me?—The charms of Elmira began to fade visibly under the pressure of her languishing complaint. She was now become so extremely feeble, as to be no longer able to rise from her bed. I seldom left her even for a moment, and every care which marital tenderness could bestow, every skill which physical aid could display, were vainly lavished on her desperate case. In fine, a violent hemorrhage put a stop to the remainder of her suffering existence, hardly leaving her time enough to commend our little Amados to my paternal love, to embrace me, and kiss off with her last breath my sighs and tears.

The poor little babe too seemed, alas! to want my care no more. He had sucked in the mortal poison with his mother's milk. Lying constantly by her side on the bed, he had solicitously endeavoured to dispel the awful shades of approaching death, by his fond and innocent caresses. But when he found her tongue mute to his sweet prattle; when he saw her eyes closed to eternal sleep;

when her eloquent mien could tell him no more how infinitely she cherished him; when all his attempts to rouse her from that deep slumber proved fruitless: when he beheld me in a state of desperate stupefaction, and Alfonso, the maid and all our neighbours in tears, he appeared to become sensible, that his dear mother had bid him an everlasting adieu. The poor little orphan could not weep; he would frequently hide his glowing face in my lap and ask: "When will mamma awake? Is she angry with us? Why don't she answer, papa?"—My silent grief told him enough, and he comprehended it by degrees.—And when he heard, that she would soon be borne away from his sight, he ran with all the eagerness of distress into the garden, and shortly after came back with a nosegay of her favourite jessamines, which he stuck, as his last farewell on her unconscious bosom.

Oft have I surprised him afterwards, lingering pensive on the flowery beds, culling the expanded roses, and scattering their leaves, as if they could charm no more, on the wings
of

of the fleeting breeze. Sometimes when I was with him, he would pluck a nosegay, divide it conscientiously into equal shares, and present one half to me; but then he hung his head, and of the other half, flower after flower, dropt from his hands. He sobbed aloud, pickt them up again, and with a trembling arm held them towards the sky, because Elmira had told him, she should one day ascend thither. Thus withered gradually the blossom of a once blest union, and two moons had not quite revolved over my devoted head, than this darling of my soul was entombed with his mother in the same grave.

The few friends, whom I had gained in the vicinage of my desolate cot, did all they could to soothe my sorrow. Their kind offices were not misbestowed, since I saw myself not quite abandoned to solitude. By several innocent fêtes they imperceptibly revived my languid spirits, and by manly and salutary conversations, relieved my mind from the heavy load that must otherwise have crushed it.

I married Juana, (this was the name of the girl whom my ever to be lamented wife had adopted as a companion and a friend) to an honest farmer, and intending to quit the cottage whose presence never ceased to retrace the painful picture of my past happiness, I resigned it to her as a portion, with all its appurtenances. The boon was received with gratitude, and long have its haunts resounded with blessings on the donor.

I derived the greatest comfort from the papers Elmira had left behind her: from them I perceived for the first time, all the extent of the loss I had sustained in that excellent woman. I was very eager to get possession of them, the moment I could, with propriety, do it. It was this eagerness that saved them, as attempts had been made by my invisible persecutors to deprive me of this valuable deposit. But the security of my locks bade defiance to a slight attack, and they wanted perhaps time or inclination, to make a more forcible attempt. On the same evening I paid the last funeral rites to my deceased wife, I perused and burnt them all the next morning. My memory keeps faithfully

fully stored every memorable part of their contents, and no human being could forthwith interpose between me and Elmira.

C H A P. XIII.

I WILL now proceed to give a faithful extract of that part of Elmira's history, and use as far as a lively imagination permits it, her own expressions.

" I awoke, half insensible, from that long swoon, and found myself in a coffin. Several others stood about me, and the putrescent exhalations of the vault were the first impression my senses received. A pale glimmering lamp hung from the middle of the dread abode, and keenly penetrated my mind with all its concomitant terrors.

" An awful situation! I knew not what to do. Was I to call out for help, or quietly wait the issue? The lamp told me, I was in a place not intirely forsaken by men, and a general lassitude and relaxation of strength, were the next torturing sensation I felt. But they would not leave me time for long re-

flection. Soon I heard some voices approaching from a gallery, whose opening I could faintly descry. I could even understand the topic and expressions of their talk. Some abused the inhuman cruelty of Don Carlos ; others condemned my imprudence ; while a few excused me, saying it was very natural for a weak female to become under similar circumstances, the victim of an artful and consummate villain. After a stoppage of several minutes at the farther end of the gallery, I saw a train of persons of both sexes, file off through the avenue, and enter the vault with piteous and sympathizing faces. Some were carrying candles, phials and glasses, others bore linen and other articles of female vesture. Looking about at the glare of reinforced light, I saw myself wrapt up in woollen, and several vases standing around me.

“ When they discovered me sitting erect in the bier, they uttered several shouts of joy. In a few seconds they changed the shroud into a neat and comfortable dress, removed me into a spacious and airy apartment,

ment, where I was put into a warm and well-perfumed bed. Decency made the greater part of my visitors retire, leaving only two women who staid with me, till I had quite recovered.

"They then congratulated me on my deliverance, and praised God for having made them the instruments of his divine benefit.

—"Thank Heaven with us, my Lady," began one of them, "for having been rescued from hands at once cruel and perfidious, to fall into ours."

—"What cruel and perfidious hands do you mean?" returned I with astonishment.

—"Those of your pretended lover, Don Carlos de Grandez."

—"Hold thy calumnious tongue, wretched creature," interrupted I, "and distil not thy poison on a name I adore!"

"Not so warm, my Lady," replied she quite coolly; "it will only require a few days to convert you to our opinion. We all are members of a society, who make it their duty to relieve the suffering and the wretched, and to obliterate, if possible, the very recollection

collection of their misfortunes—and, indeed, my Lady, we thought ourselves entitled to your best thanks.”—

“ Circumstanced as I was, what answer could I have made to the vile tools of a mysterious vengeance, after such a declaration? I was silent, and having resolved to keep all my ideas and thoughts to myself, only became their sport, without reserve. It was evident, in whose hands I had fallen, and what I had heard of the mystic Cabal on my nuptial day, now presented itself in stronger colors to my mind. Without being able to dive to the bottom of the sense of this phenomenon, its slight concatenation of results, was enough to corroborate the truth of my conjectures.

“ If there was a single resource left, to disentangle myself from their snares, it could only be such an one, as they had not the least suspicion of my meditating. I feigned therefore to become gradually more attentive and yielding to their various insinuations, I seemed, without affectation, to alter my mind, and if I sought solitude, they only fancied

fancied it would prove the more auspicious to their designs. With inward reluctance I embraced all the plans they proposed to divert me, and make me forget as they called him a treacherous, dissipated husband. A light sort of sprightliness, which I never suffered to border on petulance, gave a varnish of nature to my new modelled deportment, and fortified them in their presumption, while it gave me hopes of seizing some lucky moment, when being less guarded, I might deceive their vigilance and give them the slip.

" Meanwhile a crowd of very gay ladies and gentlemen came to pay me frequent visits. At last they persuaded me to accompany them on a nightly excursion to an adjacent manor-house, which, on my arrival, they told me, was destined to be my temporary residence. The locality was, indeed, charming, and the garden large and arranged with taste. Walking became, therefore, my principal pastime and amusement. Although I never was without company, or at least without attendants, who kept an eye upon me

me at a distance, and the happy period of my deliverance was yet perhaps very remote, still I occupied myself with a variety of plans, to bring it imperceptibly nearer.

" At the same time care was taken to keep off every thing that could render me irksome. Rural fêtes, the freedom of a select company of flattering and insinuating women and amiable young men, were to finish with laughter and graces what had been planned and begun under such serious circumstances. All breathed a general, half-apparent and delicately concealed effort to please me, and to anticipate my wishes before they even existed.

" There actually were moments, in which I felt myself led, as it were by enchantment, to return their friendly advances. I became more candid, and had not the few hours of their vigilance weakened the impression of those of their assiduity and unremitting attention, I could scarce have defended myself from yielding to a delirium which must have plunged me into everlasting misery.

" Among

" Among the young men, who surrounded me, was one of such seemingly perfect accomplishments, both of person and mind, of such a treacherous and seducing fire, as ultimately rendered him pliable to all my wishes. It was he who seemed to be the foremost to make pretensions to my favor ; he only lived in my looks, and was happy or unhappy in the various whims and changes of my humor. Never were all the arts of insidious seduction more strongly combined in one object ; each circumstance concurred to his advantage ; all that the company said or did, helped to raise and support his influence, and convinced by time and his invariable solicitude of the genial purity of his passion, I should inevitably have fallen in the long run, had not a little incident snatch me for ever from his hopes, and restored me to myself and my projects.

He had a small Bolognese lap-dog, and I became so uncommonly fond of this canine charmer, that I oftentimes gave him to understand, its possession would be very grateful to my liking. At first he seemed rather unwilling

willing to part with the favourite animal, till one forenoon he promised to surrender him the same evening. Some time previous to the hour in which my visitors were wont to pay me their homage, I took a walk towards the large bower in the garden, when softly tripping behind the verdure, I perceived the young suitor at the entrance of the former, busily employed with his little dog. Curiosity made me stop and peep through the thick foliage, when I observed him in the act of tying a collar round the creature's neck, and having done this part of the business, he kissed him, softly whispering these words : " Poor Corrulla ; so you and I must part for a while : but always will I love thee better than the prey I shall catch by the means of thy decoying."

These words penetrated my feelings with the keenness of a dagger ; insulted honor bled, and offended self-love called aloud for vengeance : but prudence hastening to my assistance, prevented me from breaking out in a torrent of invectives and reproaches against the atrocious villain who meditated nothing less

less than my dishonour and ruin. He should have seen an Elmira, quite different from her who had hitherto so kindly condescended to permit his visits, but this gratuitous discovery by holding up to my reason all the dangers which threatened me, afforded a more salutary lesson, than all the effects resulting from the momentary gratification of an hasty revenge, which would only have served to whet the malice of an incorrigible miscreant.

" I returned to my apartment, deeply sensible of the necessity of keeping up the appearances of the part I had began to act. I forced myself back within the limits of that placid serenity, that ingenuous frankness and unassuming simplicity, which those that know me, have always remarked in my real character. The evening came, my fashionable visitors appeared as usual, and the designing beau delivered up his lap dog with all the ceremonials that can possibly attend the surrender of some great and valuable sacrifice. I received the gift with all the pleasantness of conscious obligation, and with all the airs of remunerating friendship. The traitorous seducer

ducer smiled contentment and approbation, and soon afterwards had the assurance of claiming the purposed reward for his present. But forewarned as I was, opportunities were never wanting on my part, to evade his tender threats and loathsome caresses.

“ Thus some weeks again elapsed, without my having any greater prospect than I had the first day, of effectuating my flight. The danger became daily more urgent; I neither knew the place nor its environs, and was seldom left an hour unguarded. At last I attempted, in the face of a thousand difficulties, that, which under more favourable circumstances I had never felt myself bold enough to execute. A few minutes previous to a fête that was to be given in honour of me, I seized an auspicious moment to deceive the vigilance of my keepers, went into the garden, where by means of a rope-ladder, I ascended a walnut-tree by throwing the rope over one of its lowermost branches, and removing the ladder, climbed up as high as I could towards the top, and hid myself in the thick green of its leaves. Soon after a solemn procession of my

mystic

mystic hosts drew near the spot where a throne was erected for me to receive them, but the bird had fled, and I had the pleasure, from my loftier seat, to witness their rage, their disappointment and unsuccessful searches.

“ Late at night, I descended from the tree by the same operation which I had used to get up to it. A small path soon led me to a village, at the distance of several leagues from my late residence, where darkness and chance farther favoured me in my enterprize.

“ Here I exchanged my cloathes, blackened my face, and made my way begging to the next town, where I stopped to procure myself the means necessary for defraying the expences of my journey through the rest of Spain to France.

“ It is a circumstance necessary to be mentioned here, that my own jewels and those which Don Carlos presented me with on my wedding-day at St. Jago, had been given by the latter, on my supposed death, to the Superior of the monks, for prayers to be said by the fathers for the repose of my departed soul. These jewels had been restored to me, soon after

after my resurrection in the vault, probably through the influence of the Cabal, with whom that chief of holy friars, was no doubt leagued. I had taken them with me the moment I went to make my escape, and disposing of some of them at the first town I reached in my flight, the produce in money was amply sufficient to answer every exigency in the farther prosecution of my journey. I now bought a neat travelling-dress made up in the newest French fashion; and on my safe arrival at Marseilles found a good market for the remainder of my valuables. The sum arising from their sale enabled me to purchase this rural retreat, where nothing more than the presence of my Carlos is wanting, to terminate a short life, in the endearing sweets of conjugal happiness and peaceful tranquillity.

“ Many times have I written from this place, to my dear Carlos, to his and my friends, but no answer having ever been received, I conclude, that my letters must be intercepted by the machinations of that ruthless Cabal. There is hardly an office of the state, from the highest department to the lowest,

lowest, in which those wretches have not accomplices or venal spies; this I could collect from the conversation of the company in whose hands I fell after my trance in the mansion of the dead.

" I have no doubt, but their diabolical art had made them infuse some poison in the festive nuptial cup, which after I had quaffed it to implore happiness on our union, yielded slowly the dreadful effect of a lethargic slumber, made to imitate dissolution and to occasion this cruel parting. From the same source, I have also been able to learn, on overhearing them in their secret haunts, that while my Carlos was lying senseless on the floor, dilirious from the grief occasioned by so sudden a loss, the monsters substituted a putrid corpse in lieu of my body to hasten the burial.

" I am well aware, that my return to Spain after deceiving those relentless strangers, would be instant death to me, perhaps without seeing once more a cherished husband, for whose sake I should have braved such a danger. The duty and care I owe to his infant,

fant, and the sickly state of my health, bid me stay in this lonely retreat, where I am writing this history for his information. To send it to Spain would be folly, as the manuscript would share the same fate as the many letters I have written to him already. Two years longer will I wait, to see, if by some unforeseen accident, none of my correspondence will fall into his hands, and make him fly to cheer the melancholy which warps the decline of hapless days—should this last hope, like so many others, be frustrated—or should death snatch me from this world, before the expiration of the limited term—I hereby solemnly conjure the municipal officers of this place, to give all the publicity they can to these memoirs, in the journals and news-papers of France and Spain, in order that my dear husband, Don Carlos de Grandez, may learn these details so interesting to his honor, his peace and happiness.”

These are the posthumous remains of the history of my beloved, faithful and never to be forgotten Elmira. How wonderful are the turns of human fate ! How much reason did

not

not I find here, had I been the greatest infidel living, to adore and admire the wisdom of an all-directing Providence !

C H A P. XIV.

HAVING fulfilled the duties of a husband and a father, I prepared to perform those of friendship. Predetermined to quit an abode, which incessantly retraced to my mind the instability of mortal happiness, mingled with its bitterest recollections, I prepared to join the two friends who had, as I stated elsewhere, preceded me to Paris. When we last parted, it had been mutually agreed on between us, that should any unforeseen obstacle prevent or retard my journey, to apprise them of it, by addressing a letter to be left at the Spanish Ambassador's at Paris. Unfortunately, amidst the transports of my meeting again with a beloved wife, I had forgot this promise, which did not return to my mind, till the fatal consequences arising from

my pardonable neglect, were become irretrievable.

Having prepared every thing for my departure to the French metropolis, I sent off a letter to my friends, apologizing in the strongest terms for my involuntary breach of promise, and informing them, that I would be at the Spanish Ambassador's in Paris, three weeks at farthest from the date of my notice, requesting, at the same time, an immediate answer by return of post.

Having myself put this letter into the post office at Marseilles, gotten every thing ready to set out, and taken an affectionate leave of the small circle of neighbours and friends, what was my surprise,—when I received the following answer from the Spanish Ambassador himself:

“ SENNOR,

“ YOUR friends are returned to Spain,
“ where news of the most important nature
“ await you. Without entering into fuller
“ particulars, which would doubtless prove
“ afflicting, I have only to request, that on
“ receipt

“ receipt of the present lines you will embark
“ in the first ship that sails from Marseilles:
“ to Spain. It will be useless for you to
“ waste time in writing to me for farther ex-
“ claircissements, as I deem it inconsistent
“ with the regard I ever entertained for your
“ house and yourself, to give them. All I
“ can now tell you, is, that you are supposed
“ to be dead in your own country, and that
“ to remove this conjecture, so unfavorable
“ to your affairs, it will be best to show your-
“ self there among your friends and the liv-
“ ing.

“ I am, with due respect yours, &c.”

Our Ambassador, who was then at the court of Versailles, was a distant relation of my mother's, and a great well-wisher to our family in general. I had therefore no reason to hesitate in complying with his requisition, and speeding immediately to Marseilles, found a ship ready to set sail to Cadiz the next day, the wind being just then very steady and favorable. Having settled for my passage, I went on board early the next morning, and

at noon had cleared the land and lost sight of it, scudding fast before a prosperous gale.

I reached Cadiz, after a passage, the shortest perhaps ever known, and walking up the principal street leading to and from the harbor, had the mortification to see the following advice or hand-bill stuck up, at some of its corners :

" PROCLAMATION.

" *Cadiz, March 23, 1796.*

" WHEREAS a most shocking, inhuman and barbarous murder has been committed some time in the course of this instant month on the road between this city and Medina Sidonia, on the body of Don Carlos de Grandez, a Marquis and Grandee of this kingdom, lately resident at Alcantara, in the province of Estramadura, and on taking due judicial inquisition on the said body, it has been discovered with its hands and feet cut off, and so much disfigured with wounds, gashes, bruises and blood, as hardly to be cognizable

ble, and stript of all its clothes, money, effects, &c. except a waistcoat, containing a card with the name of Don Carlos de Grandez engraved on it, and a fine shirt of Holland linen, marked with the initials D. C. G. surmounted with a Marquis's coronet, both of which are deposited in the town-hall of this city :

“ We, the Corregidor, the Magistrates, Councillors and others, the officers justiciary of this Royal City and Sea-port, in order to promote the ends of public justice, do hereby promise and award to every one and all, who may or shall discover or detain, or cause to be discovered or detained, one, several, or all of the parties concerned in that diabolical act, so that it may be the means of him, her, or them being brought to condign punishment, a Reward of Four Thousand hard Pistoles, in lawful currency of this realm, to be paid on conviction of each or every one of these atrocious assassins, by the Royal Bank of St. Carlos, at Madrid.

“ One moiety of the said Reward will also be given, besides a free grant of the King’s

most gracious pardon, to any party or accomplice in the murder, (save such person or persons who actually committed it) on giving such information as may tend to the discovery and apprehension of the offenders.

" By his Majesty's Special Commands,

" DELASQUIERRAS,

" Corregidor,"

" Long Live the King !

Without losing a moment's time, I unpacked and opened a trunk to take out some necessary papers, and waited on Don Delasquierras, the worthy corregidor, to identify my person, and to request him to take the usual steps to revoke the proclamation and undeceive the public respecting the horrid rumor of my assassination.

His worship, whose joy and surprize at the re-appearance of a man, supposed to have been murdered, exceeded all bounds; promised to pay immediate attention to my demand; and having stated to him the secret particulars

particulars and adventures of my journey, gave me the following account respecting this surprising case and my own family concerns :

—“ It is your mother,” said he, “ who on receiving the afflictive tidings of your death, sent the reward of four thousand pistoles, offered in the proclamation, which has been issued and fixed up in the public places of every city and town throughout the kingdom. I am grieved to inform you, that the poor lady has died since of a broken heart, leaving Don Antonio, your friend, sole executor of her last will, and the estates belonging either to her or you.

“ As your family gave information, that at the time the bloody catastrophe was supposed to have been committed, you had set out to Paris, to meet two friends, Don Fernandos di Abengha and Don Bernardo, who had gone thither before you, the magistrates of this city and Alcantara, thought proper to present this circumstance to Don Florida da Blanca, the Prime Minister of State, who transmitted an official dispatch to our Ambassador

bassador at Paris, requesting the French government to deliver up those two noblemen to the care of his excellency. A messenger, accompanied by two Alguazils, set out at the same time, to conduct them hither. The French government readily consented to this requisition, and your friends were conveyed in safe custody from Paris to this city, where they underwent several examinations, in which, much to our satisfaction, they fully substantiated their innocence, so that not the least suspicion could remain on their character. Their whole deportment, their grief, their anxiety to have the most rigorous researches made, did away every idea of culpability: and, as a farther proof of their honor and integrity, they voluntarily offered to remain in custody, till farther discoveries respecting the real perpetrators of this horrid crime should be made. This proposal, however, we thought ourselves unwarranted to accept: Not contented with the most honorable acquittal from all suspicion and reality of guilt, they, of their own accord bound themselves, under forfeiture of life and property, not to quit

quit the kingdom, till some more satisfactory
eclaircissements respecting the perpetrators of
the foul deed should have been made.

"They have not left their estates, till some time, in the beginning of this month, when owing to the active and constant exertions of Don Antonio, two servants, who formerly lived with him and had been discharged for an assault committed upon you, were apprehended on suspicion of being the murderers, owing to some threatening and malicious words which they at various times and places uttered against you, on account of having lost their places. Their landlord and several other persons have informed against them ; they are in the prisons of the inquisition at Alcantara, and, thank God ! you are arrived to save the poor fellows, as it must otherwise have gone very hard with them. The informers have, I understand, applied for the reward, which has wisely been refused till conviction. I will immediately write to the Corregidor of Alcantara to desire him to give orders that the fetters of the supposed delinquents be struck

off; and trust, you will lose no time to bring them liberty and indemnity."

Suffering a thousand pangs that innocence should thus be involved in guilt, I told his worship, that I would instantly fly to effect their deliverance and make them every compensation my fortune would allow. He applauded my justice and generosity, and having paid all necessary fees and expences, I took leave of him, with a thousand thanks for his candor and ample information.

Distracted at the loss of an excellent mother, stung with remorse at the harsh and ignominious treatment of my bosom friends, agonizing with the horrid idea of the unmerited sufferings of two other innocent men, what language is strong enough to paint the emotions of my heart! I darted through the streets like a maniac to procure post-horses, and leaving Alfonso to follow me with the luggage, sped away for Alcantara.

C H A P. XV.

NOTWITHSTANDING the muleteer made the utmost dispatch possible, I thought my journey from Cadiz to Alcantara the slowest I ever made. On my arrival, I flew immediately to the Corregidor, to obtain the release of two innocent men, condemned to the horrors of a dungeon, and loaded with the galling chains of supposed criminality. He received me with astonishment, and heard my tale with sullen remorse. " You come too late, Don Carlos," said the judge; " one of the victims of presumptive guilt is no more. Twice he was put to the tormenting rack, and suffered his body to be lacerated by the whip of the executioner, and his limbs to be forced out of joint by the fatal machine: still persisting in the solemn profession of his innocence. During the third performance of the torture, nature yielded, and with his last dying groan, he said: ' I am innocent! — He has left a wife and three

children without support, who will have to bewail this legal murder. As to the other unhappy man, he has been once put to the torture, which had such an effect on his frame, that an immediate repetition of the cruel process, would doubtless put an end to his existence. By the advice of the surgeon of the prison, he has been respited for three weeks, and though you are come to restore his liberty, I am afraid it will be but of little comfort to him, as he is already made a cripple for life. What a shocking reflection for a judge, that he has himself committed the crime of murder, which with a mistaken zeal, and authorized by the form of barbarous laws, he only intended to punish. Though these absolve me from all guilt, yet how criminal and remorseful do I stand at the shrine of violated humanity! I am inconsolable, Sir, and begin to detest the office, which defeating the ends of real justice, constitutes me the lawful tormentor of those of my fellow-creatures who innocently incur the suspicion of crime."

"Worthy Magistrate," interrupted I, "such delicate and humane feelings, in the bosom

bosom of a man that holds so stern and rigorous a charge as you do ; a charge the exercise of which is apt to nip every germ of pity, and to steel the heart against the soft sensations inspired by the sight of the suffering wretch—such feelings excite my admiration and double my reverence. But I cannot join in condemning you, for having been the involuntary author of the destruction of an innocent person, since your motives were pure, and the circumstances such as baffled all human caution and foresight. You are bound to execute the laws, which, if they be cruel or insufficient throw all the censure and responsibility on those only that enacted them, and not on the inferior functionary, that has neither the power to amend, nor to abrogate. The case of the two unfortunate sufferers is shocking beyond description, but the whole remorse ought to bear on their denunciators, and in the first instance, on the execrable villains, who exposed the dead and mangled body with such false marks and appearances as to represent me. I will cheerfully give one half of my fortune, if any of the inven-

tors of that diabolical scheme can be discovered, and do intreat your worship to circulate notices to this purport all over Spain. As to the family of the unfortunate man that is now dead, I will make a suitable provision for them for life. Nor will I neglect to make amends to his surviving companion, whose release I beg you will now sign and permit me to deliver it to him."

The Corregidor instantly complying with my request, I hastened to the prison, to embrace the unhappy object of unmerited punishment, and to acquaint him with his deliverance. Being admitted into the dreary cell in which he was confined, I was so overwhelmed with pain at the sight of his miserable condition, that I had just time to rush into his arms, and exclaim in half broken accents, "My dear friend, you are free!"—before I fainted. The moment I recovered, the poor fellow was kneeling before me, quite transported with joy at the unexpected news of his liberty, which was confirmed to him by the goaler himself who had attended me to the dungeon. "Rise," cried I, "thou injured

injured man, it is I who ought to kneel to you, instead of your kneeling to me." I now told him the whole case respecting the pretended murder, and the happy vicissitude by which he was rescued from a cruel and ignominious death; adding, that I would settle an annuity upon him, sufficient for him to live in comfortable independence for the remainder of his days. His gratitude seemed boundless, and having given him my purse with all its contents for a temporary supply, I took leave of him, and sent my own carriage to convey him to one of the principal inns of the city, to stay there to recruit his health and spirits, till he should have fixed on some place of residence. I then went to the widow of his deceased companion, to administer unto her all the consolation my eloquence could bestow, and to bring her all the relief that might be required. Attended by one of the runners of the prison, I entered an old mean house in the suburb, and was conducted to a garret, where a heart-rending scene again presented itself to my view!

A young

A young woman, wan and pale with distress, was stretched out by illness and want on a litter of dirty straw, while three helpless children, provoked by famine, surrounded her piercing her ears with the cry of "bread!" The craving looks of this miserable family plainly spoke, that they had been without this necessary article for some time, nor was there the least crumb of it to be found in their desolate shed. A large pitcher of water, besides the straw, was all that was left of moveable property; an unfeeling landlord having a few days before seized the very bed of the wretched mother, to pay the arrears of the rent which had been owing ever since her ill-fated husband's confinement. His unhappy fate had not only overwhelmed her with grief and disease, but both the world and the world's law had ceased to befriend her. Sharing the unmerited infamy of her husband, she had found, wherever she applied for relief, the gates of pity and charity shut against her, and her guiltless offspring; such are the effects of barbarous prejudice in every country not sufficiently enlightened with

with the torch of reason, or warmed with the beneficent glow of universal philanthropy. I was all feeling, when I heard the disastrous tale of this unhappy mother, and pouring the balm of comfort into the deep wounds her suffering breast had received, gladdened her maternal heart with the promise of ample and instant relief, and a decent provision to support her children and self. In order to give a prompt effect to my promise, in proportion to the exigency of the circumstances, I put my hand in my pocket to pull out some gold, but found none, as I had already bestowed it on the man in the prison, together with the purse that contained it. Unwilling however, that their sufferings of which I considered myself as a distant cause, should unnecessarily be prolonged, even for a moment, I took a diamond ring off my finger, and begged my conductor to go and pledge it. Having waited his return I remitted the produce to the widowed parent, informing her at the same time, that in a few days I would put her in possession of a farm on one of my estates, and settle an annuity upon her and

and her children. Having received her most fervent blessings, I took my leave of her, deeply moved with this horrid scene of human affliction.

Thus I spent the three first hours after my arrival at Alcantara in the deliverance of one innocent man, and in making to the relict of another, that had perished unjustly, some sort of compensation for the cruel and irreparable loss she had sustained. Such were the laws which humanity prescribed to my conduct, and which, in my opinion, ought always to outweigh the secondary considerations of friendship and polite custom. The genteel and the ceremonious will wonder, why I did not first visit my friends; but I will answer them, that where the life of the innocent is at stake, humanity justly claims our first care, and as justly supersedes the offices of friendship. To have acted otherwise, would have been fixing an indelible stigma of remorse upon my conscience. My friends were perfectly safe, they neither suffered from want nor from the galling chains of imprisonment, while, on the other hand,

I knew

I knew innocence hovering on the brink of destruction for my sake.

I now went to my mother's late mansion, where on my approach, the escutcheon hung out in its front, painfully convinced me of its being deserted by its respected and beloved tenant, I knocked; a strange servant opened the door, and having enquired after Don Antonio, was informed that he was up stairs.

I desired the man to announce immediately to his master the arrival of Don Carlos de Grandez, his friend, who was supposed to have been murdered. The fellow walked up, and I followed him gently to the very door of the apartment. I heard him deliver his message, on which I prepared to enter, when my friend prevented me by eagerly flying to the door and rushing into my arms. The circumstances and sensations attending such a meeting are better passed over in silence, as they beggar all the powers of language. Having remained for some time in mute rapture, I did all I could to rouze him from his astonishment, by relating every particular of my

my late adventures and the supposed murder. Hardly able to articulate his words, he expressed his regret at the fate of the unhappy sufferers, and seemed to be extremely agitated with grief and remorse. I told him, what I had done for the relief of the surviving innocent man, and of the family of him that was dead. All I could say, had but little effect on composing his perturbed spirits, and the only consolation he felt, was, as he told me, his having an ample fortune, which allowed him to make some amends to those cruelly injured persons, which he afterwards did, in the same proportion I had already done.

He then gave me ample details of the melancholy death of my mother, who had left a will, constituting Alfonso, my servant and guide, sole heir of the bulk of our property. "I was present," said Don Antonio, "when this will was made; and remonstrated against a munificence which I condemned as ill-bestowed, urging at the same time in support of my argument, that Alfonso, according to appearances, might be suspected as the author,

or

or at least an accomplice in the crime, since he had absconded, and that had he been faithful, he must have been found murdered with his master. But all my logic could not dissuade her from the resolution she had taken, and she declared on her death-bed, that any one who should harass Alfonso with legal pursuits, would be the enemy of her name and family, as she was convinced, from reasons not to be divulged, of his incorruptible honor and integrity. A clause was then inserted in the will, unknown to me, by which I was to succeed to your property, and the remainder to be distributed in charitable donations, if Alphonso should not make his appearance. Meanwhile I was appointed executor in concert with the Governor of this city. This will, by her directions, was opened immediately after the burial of her remains, which were deposited close to the supposed murdered body, in your family vault. I have now to lament, that I left directions with the corregidores of all the principal cities and towns to detain Alfonso wherever he should be found. I hope my friendship will plead my excuse,

since

since the mysterious assurances of your mother, did not afford me sufficient reason not to try such an expedient to gain the ends of public justice. My suspicion would also have fallen upon Francisca and Don Pedro, the latter of whom returned to his wife the day after your departure, and is since gone with her to Mexico, where he holds the office of Comptroller, by the King's own nomination and appointment. I shall now send for the Governor, and Dons Fernandos and Bernandos, who have suffered much for your sake, but whose friendship will deem itself sufficiently rewarded by seeing you again.

I embraced my Antonio and thanking him with tears, we passed several hours in such important conversation, as had escaped us before. Soon after my two friends came, and the rest of the day glided away in joyful raptures at this unexpected meeting. At night, the governor also came, when being made acquainted with the whole of my marvellous story, the will and executorship were formally cancelled and resigned to me. It was not till early in the morning when my friends retired,



retired, after which Don Antonio and I continued together to settle the necessary sums destined for the maintenance of the released innocent man, the widow, and her orphan children. This done, we both betook ourselves to rest.

C H A P. XVI.

THIS rest, if it deserve the name, was totally interrupted by the most painful considerations of the past. I only ascribed the invention of the murder to the mystic cabal, who, to be revenged on my stubborn and indocile conduct, thought it expedient by that scheme to bring the grey hairs of my mother with sorrow to the grave, and by throwing in virtue of her last testament, all my property into the hands of strangers, hoped by involving me in temporary confusion, to compel me to have recourse to their odious councils. The access which both Francisca and her husband had to my villa during my absence, not only furnished them with frequent

quent opportunities to seize or steal such effects as the shirt and the printed card found on the mangled corpse, but even put it in their power to alienate articles of a more identical description to prove the murder, which they probably declined taking, as they thought those stated above sufficient to answer the sinister purposes of my relentless enemies. Though in the instance of the two innocent domesticks I had reason to be deterred from the very idea of suspicion, yet I found it impossible, on this occasion, to banish it from my mind. But it could answer no salutary end, as the parties suspected, had fled out of the reach of legal enquiry, and sought their abode in a distant world. The very great confidence of my mother in Alfonso, I considered as the effect of feminine weakness, and myself satisfied with his innocence and long-tried rectitude, I could not form the least supposition of its secret motives which a more distant period of time ultimately brought to light.

The day after my arrival was spent in making application to the inquisitors and the bishop of

of my diocese, for leave to have the body of the stranger buried in our family vault disinterred, and committed to the ground of the church-yard of our parish. This was granted without difficulty. The next step I took was, to get back the reward deposited in the bank of St. Carlos, and to distribute it, in two equal halves of two thousand pistoles each, to the surviving innocent man, and the widow.

The Corregidor, agreeable to my request, also issued a proclamation, tendering the reward I had promised for the discovery of the parties who contrived the scheme of the supposed murder, but I never obtained any elucidation respecting the matter, to this very hour.

A third day had already elapsed, and my faithful Alfonso, whom I had every reason to expect on the second, was not yet arrived. I resolved to set out with two of my friends in quest of him, when early in the morning of my intended departure, I was awakened by my servants, and desired to walk down into the hall, where I found Alfonso in the

custody of two Alguazils, who had escorted him all the way from Medina Sidonia, where he had been stopped on suspicion of being the murderer, and conducted to Alcantara to clear up all doubts of my being alive. We paid the expences attending his convoy, and both Don Antonio and I, offered him an handsome indemnity in money for the unjust persecution he had suffered, but he generously declined the recompence, and bestowing the highest encomiums upon the friendship and vigilant love of justice of Don Antonio, declared, that under similar circumstances, had he been Don Antonio, he would have strictly acted in the same manner.

At this juncture Count Selami, a Major in the same regiment to which I belonged, left the army owing to his father's death, whom he succeeded in his title and fortune. My acquaintance with him commenced at the royal military school, and our intimacy grew stronger as we advanced in years. He had heard of my misfortunes, and came purposefully from Toledo to manifest his condolence at my losses. He staid for several weeks at my house

house at Alcantara; where the agreeable company of Don Fernandos di Albengha, Don Bernardos and other friends served to repress the gloom, which the heaviness and complication of my misfortunes must otherwise have raised to the highest degree.

Animated with the love of adventure, it was at last agreed, that we should accompany the Count to Toledo, where, after settling his affairs, he promised to set out with us for Paris. Don Antonio, who had contracted an unconquerable fondness for a rural life and domestic enjoyments, could not bear the thought of quitting his country even for a month, on which account I left him the superintendence of all my estates, and providing myself with a considerable sum of money, took an affectionate leave of him, and followed Count Selami and the rest of my friends to Toledo.

It will not be improper here, to give a brief sketch of the characters of my new companions, as they will be found to act more or less conspicuous parts in the sequel of this history.

Don Bernardos was one of the most singular characters in existence, and peculiarly remarkable for the mixture of the extremes of two opposite temperaments. On the one hand he would be choleric and rash to excess, and on the other, sedate, passive and tranquil in the same manner. All this appeared to be systematical in his conduct. Still I thought the former temper the more congenial to his nature, and the other merely forced into practice by the philosophy of life.

His mind was of the deepest cast of Spanish gravity, and I cannot say, that I ever saw more than a smile on his countenance, even in the most festive moments of social and convivial pleasure. Nothing could disturb the equilibrium of his soul, which having tasted and exhausted all sorts of prosperities and adversities, acquired a natural frigidity under every change and vicissitude of life and fortune. Nature, for the first time, had drained herself as it were in this moving phenomenon; and had nothing left to rouse his torpid sensibility. Without a tear would he witness the convulsive struggles of humanity, without

without concern partake of its felicities. No intreaty could mollify, no offence provoke him. Without a single weak moment, without the least solicitude for his reputation, and as insensible to the opinion of the world as to that of his friends, he, with stedfast eyes followed, as he called it, the long projected plan of an austere virtue, which was to be his guide to the last gasp of a life without relish.

And what must appear most surprising, is, that so far from being the advocate of virtue, he would calmly move in the vortex of vices and follies, nor even seek to prevent them in his friends. He never spoke for or against men, their actions or opinions, and human greatness and human profligacy, seemed to him a mere nullity in the scale of beings.

He was not read in books, and to have made him take up one, it required to be a prodigy of literature. No moralist, no philosopher ever furnished him with principles, and he had borrowed them all from the vast book of experience, from the intercourse with men, and his own destiny.

It seemed, as if He had divested himself of all his senses. What he did for his body, was merely to preserve its health, and he would assert, that the prudent care of it, was one half of virtue. He never drank wine or spirits, and when alone, made but one frugal repast, consisting of bread, cheese, butter or dried fruit and vegetables. This rigid diet, instead of debilitating his constitution, only gave it fresh vigor and energy.

Count Selami was also a person of a distinguished character, with which he combined the beauty of an Adonis. He was good-natured and uncommonly gentle. His mind was brilliant and lively, tinctured with the captivating touches of a soft melancholy and an engaging kind of enthusiasm. Only once in his life he had been in love, and that unsuccessfully. He seemed to be the idol of the fair sex, and his heart was always open to the united impressions of tenderness and friendship. To so many amiable qualities he joined the untainted reputation of a man of the keenest wit, the strictest honor, and the most undaunted spirit and gallantry.

Don

Don Fernandos di Albengha was a warm and jovial companion, the soul of our company for an uninterrupted flow of cheerfulness and good spirits, but very little endowed with what is called real wit.

In this company I spent near four weeks at Toledo, in the most select fashionable circles, among balls, routes and masquerades. At night we frequently gave suppers, at which nothing but jollity and good fellowship presided.

We had hopes of continuing much longer in this gay sphere of elegant life, but some unforeseen accidents intervening, made us accelerate our departure to Paris. The cool and saturnine character of Don Bernardos, grew so hot at a ball, probably owing to something mixed in his wine, that he picked a quarrel with a nobleman, fought and mortally wounded him in a duel, and was obliged to fly to France, where we promised to join him.

C H A P. XVII.

THE Count contracted an intrigue with an Italian actress ; and Don Fernandos and I formed a connexion with two ladies, each of whom insisting on being married to her gallant, found means to involve us in so many disagreeable situations, as obliged us at last to take French leave of them, to get rid of their importunities, which began to grow dangerous.

A short time previous to this denouement of our farce, the following occurrence happened, at the remembrance of which I still must tremble. In our nightly excursions, we were wont to leave Don Fernandos with our mistresses, and about midnight I took with the count an airing through the fields, after which we returned to town. On those occasions we used to concert the plans of our next day's amusement, and I frequently talked very freely before the count, Don Bernardos, (while he still was with us)

us) and other friends, of the machinations of the Mystic Cabal.

One night having been merrier and drank rather more than usual, the company hastened to return to Toledo. All was ready to break up, but I could not find my hat. Meanwhile the ladies and my friends, went down stairs, at it had been agreed upon; that we should all set out together. Having at last found my hat, I put out the candles in the club-room myself, and ran to join them. It was a dark night, and my carriage standing ready to receive me at the door, I got in and the coachman drove on. Somewhat inebriated I continued ranting and railing for some time, but finding my companions all silent to my waggishness, I thought they did it for joke's sake.

I now run on worse than before, and began pulling some of them about. All remained silent, when one of them breaking a brittle substance, a phosphoric fire suddenly illuminated the carriage, and I found myself amidst five persons, dressed in black, with their faces muffled with a crape of the same color.

color. I was going to faint, when one of them uncovering his face, I recognized Jago. At the same time four naked daggers were lifted and pointed at my breast.

"Traitor," cried Jago, "remember thy oath! This is the last warning thy brethren give thee! Take it with silent awe and respect our secrets! We now leave thee; beware of making the least alarm, else thy life shall pay for it." Here the flame was extinguished, the horrid strangers alighted and bade the coachman drive on. I remained half senseless in the carriage, till at last it stopt before my door, when a strange man opened it, and asked me if I pleased to alight. I was still more frightened at this incident, and almost afraid to venture out.

Perceiving however nobody else about me, I asked the driver whence he came, and who had ordered him to take charge of my carriage, while my own coachman had been left to take care of it. He informed me, that he was an inhabitant of Alcantara, and had been out to do a hackney job in the country. That on his return he stop-

ped

ped on the road before the house where my carriage stood, where a gentleman asking, whether he would carry Don Carlos to town, he answered in the affirmative and was ordered to drive it with all possible dispatch. He also added, that the gentleman had satisfied him for his trouble before-hand.

I now went up stairs and found nobody there, except those servants who had remained in town. I then ordered the same man to carry me back from whence he fetched me with all expedition. He gladly obeyed, and at a small distance from town, I met my own coachman quite out of breath crying, "Sop thief!" I pulled the string; the carriage stopt; and as soon as my man came up I asked him how he came to leave his charge? The poor fellow told me, that a gentleman who he thought belonged to our company, had desired him to go into the back-yard to have a glass of wine, and wait there, till I should bid him return to the horses. That seeing the rest of the company walking in the garden, he expected every moment to be called; but was soon alarmed by some cries, when he

the

ran out and found all the company before the gate of the house, complaining of the carriage having gone without them. "Suspecting foul play," concluded he "I ran as hard as I could to overtake the thieves." Fully satisfied with this account, I bade him follow us, and proceeding a little farther, found all the ladies and my friends returning to town on foot. They began to reproach me with playing them such a trick, when I answered, that I had had a narrow escape, and durst tell them no more, but the two coachmen would give them sufficient information.

They all seemed astonished and urged me to explain; but telling them, that such a step would inevitably cost me my life, they, with great reluctance, desisted from farther enquiries.

This disagreeable adventure added to many others, made me resolve to quit Toledo immediately, and Count Selami coincided with me in opinion. He also made me such discoveries respecting Don Bernardos and himself, from which I could easily conclude, that they were both under the influence of the Mystic Cabal, which had also occasioned them many reverses and misfortunes.

T H E

G E N I U S, &c.

THE
G E N I U S :
OR,
THE MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES
OF
DON CARLOS DE GRANDEZ.
BY THE MARQUIS VON GROSSE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

By JOSEPH TRAPP,

TRANSLATOR OF STOEVER'S LIFE OF LINNÆUS,
PICTURE OF ITALY, &c. &c.

I N T W O V O L U M E S .

V O L . II.

“ — Come, feeling night,
“ Skarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
“ And with thy bloody and invisible hand
“ Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond
“ Which keeps me pale—Light thickens; and the crow
“ Makes wing to the rooky wood:
“ Good things by day begin to droop and drouse;
“ While night’s black agents to their preys do rouse.

“ SHAKESPEARE.”

L O N D O N :
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THE

G E N I U S.

C H A P. I.

WE prepared in concert with Don Fernandos for our departure, and in less than three weeks reached the French capital.

Paris is the city, that affords more entertainment to the man of fashion than all the rest of the world. Count Selami and I fell at this time in love with Caroline de B**, a young lady of an ancient and illustrious family in Normandy. This rivalship caused a temporary disagreement between me and the count, and deprived me of his confidence for some time. The lady was neither rich nor handsome, but very attractive, owing to an excellent education, an unassuming modesty,

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B

and

and a natural kind of sprightliness, which blended all her deportment with the charms of novelty.

It was at an evening-assembly, where we were first smitten with her. Several card-parties being formed in the same apartment, and a young lady who was always one of the players, having that evening gone into the country, it had become necessary to make an alteration in the choice of partners, in consequence of which it happened, that the count and I were to play at the same table, where Caroline was placed. No sooner had she perceived the new arrangement, than she declared her unwillingness of playing with any but her former partners. This caprice set the assembly in an uproar, the gentlemen not wishing to quit their new partners, and the latter, who were ladies, spurning the very idea of such a change for the sake of Caroline. This bustle was heightened by several loud laughs, which completely disconcerted the latter, who ultimately told us, she would not play at all that night. Calm and order being apparently restored, I sat down

down by her side on the sofa, not at all displeased with the issue of the matter.

It was however every different in the heart of the count, whose eyes sparkled with rage. I consoled him laughing, when he answered doubly irritated : " For shame, Don Carlos, how can you be so insensible ? " At these words he cast a significant look upon Baron Hompesch, a German officer in the Spanish service, who was playing at another table, and still continued to make merry on our little disaster. " Don't you plainly see," added my friend, " that the whole is a pre-meditated scheme ? "

He probably was not mistaken, and the Baron behaved rather with unbecoming petulance. The count was not the man to brook any insult with impunity ; he had known the baron ever since the siege of Gibraltar, and both of them had then been the rival suitors of a Spanish lady. To this may be added the following story, which served still farther to augment the count's resentment.

The latter kept an actress of the French opera, a beautiful girl, but of a wanton and faithless character. Though he only supported her for the sake of fashion and not on account of real love, still his vanity made him believe, that he had an exclusive right to her favors as long as he purchased them. He did not consider that it were folly to exact continency from a harlot; and consequently he soon had reason to be jealous, amongst others, of the baron, who became his competitor in the good graces of that abandoned female.

Having discovered that the baron was very assiduous in his visits to Philinda whenever he was from her, he once went to her in the paroxysm of his spleen, and loaded her with the bitterest reproaches. Philinda heard him a good while with great composure, but this only serving to render him the more abusive, she at last asked him with the greatest sang-froid, " Shall I ring my servants, count, or will you take yourself off without escort, and never set a foot in my house again?" This made my friend retire quite mortified, and the

the very next evening the fickle siren appeared at the theatre on the arm of Baron Hompesch, and as his avowed mistress.

This story now seemed strongly to retrace itself in the count's memory, who began to construe the baron's ironical sneers as an insult. Advancing therefore to the latter's chair, he whispered to him :

" Baron, I am curious to know, how far you are concerned in the occurrences of this night?"

The baron with a deep inclination of his head and a bitter smile, returned in Spanish, " My lord, you shall have all possible ecclairissement on my part."

This was not the place to insist on its being given immediately. The count retiring with a mien expressive of satisfaction, manifested by his deportment every symptom of resentment which glowed in his heart.

Caroline now took great pains to make us forget the oddity of her conduct. She attempted personally to console the count, telling him with a smile, " that she would try him for once on the morrow;" but it made

no impression on his discordant mind, and while I delighted in all the charms of her gay conversation, my friend sunk into a sort of gloomy reverie, from which he with difficulty roused himself at intervals. Down we sat at last to an elegant supper, during which harmony and good humour returned. The conversation fell on the siege of Gibraltar, and some of the company seeming eager to learn its particulars, appealed to the count, who discreetly and wittily waving the subject, referred the enquirers to the baron, who, said he, had given so many signal proofs of his talents and bravery on that occasion. The baron, who never suspected, that all the world knew of his indifferent character as a military man, accepted the task of displaying his eloquence with a proud simper as the just tribute of his merits, and began the story.

It was astonishing, how adroitly this man wrought out a long account of lying adventures ; there was no engagement, no skirmish, in which by his own account, he had not been the hero of the day ; he made the whole assembly shudder at the horrors and hardships of

of war, and delicacy could scarce prevent him from detailing his gallant achievements among the ladies. I am convinced, he would actually have persuaded himself to believe all he said, so little did he observe the sarcastic smiles of several gentlemen and ladies, and we would have been condemned to listen to him till morning, had not the count, at the conclusion of a long adventure, interrupted and disconcerted the narrator, with the following phrase, which he had frequently used in the course of his tale.

" And here they awoke!"

The half-stifled laughter of the company, which accompanied this wicked folly, struck the baron dumb, and fired him with shame and rage for several minutes.

He then endeavored to vent his spleen against the count, who, with an insinuating air, addressed himself to the social circle, craving permission to relate likewise a story of that time. We all nodded applause, and beginning his narration with some significant glances at the baron, who would not have done speaking, had not the clamors of the company called him to order, he thus continued:

" On our retreat from the siege of Gibraltar, most of those who had flattered themselves with hopes of honor and profit in that enterprize, had lost all inclination for a renewal of the attempt ; three volunteers left the army immediately, and I, owing to a wound and the unfavorable state of my health, went with them on leave of absence. We all set off to the interior of Spain, to visit a common friend, who had recently married a beautiful and opulent Spanish heiress. We found this journey more pleasant than journeys generally are in my country ; two of my companions were of the same lively turn as myself ; and whenever pleasure began to slacken, the drolleries and fantastic lies of the fourth, often made us forget the badness of the roads, and the wretched accommodation we met with in some of the inns.

" This man, whom for good reasons, we shall now call Paron Braggart, was a most eccentric character. Though he knew, that we had on all occasions witnessed his behavior in the field, and had seen nothing less than heroic exploits on his part, he would nevertheless

theless invent a series of brilliant adventures, and protest, with a thousand oaths, his veracity in what he advanced.

“ Well invented!” would we often cry, though there was not a syllable of truth in all he said. But then he would pledge his honor, his life and courage to prove his assertions, which made us resolve at last, to choose the first opportunity, to put that courage to the test.

“ Our new-married friend gave us the best reception, and himself and his lady soon discovered the weak side of Braggart, whose boasted qualities we soon found occasion to try.

“ Being all at supper one night in the lodge of the garden, we were suddenly alarmed by an uncommon noise in the castle. Some servants, quite pale and trembling, came to inform our host, they had seen an apparition in one of the apartments. The ladies turned pale, and frightened rose from their seats; some of the gentlemen having happily conquered the first approaches of fear, began to laugh at the silliness of the do-

mestics, but our entertainer declaring the matter to be serious, ordered lighted torches, and begging the ladies quietly to wait his return, drew his sword, and requested us to follow him equally armed.

" Here a scene of tenderness ensued ; all the ladies, married or single, barricaded the door, and conjured us not to leave them alone. At last it was unanimously agreed, that the whole company should go in quest of the goblin. The ladies formed the centre, the servants with their lighted torches flanked the feminine group, and the gentlemen, with drawn swords, led the van or covered the rear.

" The emotion of our host, made me hesitate in my opinion of the matter, as I knew dissimulation to make no part of his character. I thought him incapable of wantonly frightening our fair partners, and believed some real and sufficient cause must be at the bottom.

" A solemn silence prevailed for some time, which Baron Braggart finally broke with as big an oath, as fear could possibly have made him utter. The lady who was

next

next to him (for he had carefully avoided to give his arm to any of them, that both his hands might be free, and in case of necessity his feet too) conjured him to be tranquil. He probably considered this as a challenge, to give the company some more specimens of his pretty exclamations ; as he now exhausted the whole register of curses he had ever sworn, to assure them, how he longed to measure his prowess with a spirit. This however did not hinder him from anxiously looking around, and keeping in the middle of two sturdy and robust servants who were the hindmost. He audibly gnashed his teeth at intervals, and became stiller and stiller, the more we approached the mansion. The rest were tolerably divided between fear and expectation.

" The wind blowing out some torches, heightened the terrors of some, and at last we arrived at the gate of the castle. The haunted apartment was said to be in the second story, and as we reached the bottom of the stairs, the major part of those who composed the expedition, were in a state of anguish and despondency.

spondency. The hardiest among us counted over the company to see if none had lost himself or staid behind. What was our surprize to find the valorous knight and Baron Braggart among the missing! Already a thousand railleries began to dispel fear from every heart, when the company found they had wronged him. In great haste, and with big drops of sweat on his front, the latter overtook us, alledging that some want had made him quit the group for a moment. He loudly asked for whom we were waiting, and what could make us hesitate? The company animated with his bravadoes moved up a few steps, and halted again. Our hostess kept back her spouse by the skirts of his coat, and would not let him loose, till he sternly asked her, whether she took him for a child. Don Braggart now discharged another volley of oaths from the rear. The marquis advanced, I and another gentleman followed him closely, and all the rest kept motionless on the stairs.

“ The torches having likewise kept behind, I was obliged to step back and wrest one

one of them from a servant, when I could not help smiling at the fear of some of the men, who, though they had fought like lions before Gibraltar, and borne with defiance all the disasters of that unhappy siege, stood now like dastards, overwhelmed with the prejudices of religious superstition. So far from catching the contagion, it redoubled my courage, I darted to the door, the torch in one hand, and my sword in the other, opened it, and ushered in our host.

" At our entrance, a large form with two fiery eyes almost as big as window-ventilators and a wide mouth stained with gore, slowly advanced against us. The sight of this moving machine was frightful, and the marquis hastily retreated one or two yards, which the group on the stairs perceiving, they rushed down again with the impetuosity of a torrent that forces its banks. In less than a second, the marquis and I were left alone.

Notwithstanding this, I could not help making some observations on the grotesque appearance of the figure, which I assimilated to the giant, who challenges the knight of

La

La Mancha to the combat. This ludicrous idea made me suspect a fraud. I had also perceived on entering the apartment, that another figure made its way through a side door, which formed a communication with the apartments of the marchioness, and terminated in the garden. At the same time I perceived that a gold repeater, which used to stand on the chimney in a case, was missing, though it had been there when I was in the room in the beginning of the evening.

Seizing, therefore, the wavering marquis by the arm, "By G—d," cried I, "they are nothing but thieves!" He coincided with me, and both of us made several passes at the figure with our swords, which it skilfully parried with a long staff. A servant with a torch having by this time come in, and the gentleman who left us in the beginning observed that the torch, which I still held in my left hand was useless, and threw it flaring in the face of my antagonist. This broke one of his large glass eyes, and otherwise deranged his head-dress. I no sooner saw this, than I also flung down my sword, laid hold of his staff,

staff, wrested it from him, and with the assistance of the marquis brought him to the ground. The man displayed an almost supernatural strength in his despair, and had he been properly armed, might have killed us both; but he now had to do with four, and being soon exhausted, began to ask quarters, in a hollow supplicating tone. The marquis generously promised him pardon, and on being unmasked, he confessed, that he belonged to a gang of five house-breakers, who had seized this opportunity to rob the house, while the family were in the garden.

We now bound him, and left him under the care of the servant who attended us. The marquis and my companion searched the apartments, and I hastened down stairs, to call the servants to their assistance. A dead silence reigned every where, and not a soul could I meet with. Some lighted flambeaux had even been left on the stairs, to facilitate the retreat of the fugitives, and at the foot of the stair-case, I found a lady who had fainted. A little farther laid Baron Braggart, likewise nearly gone. On hearing somebody come

come down, he hid his head in his handkerchief, and patiently waited his fate.

" Prepare, baron," cried I, " for thine end is near!"

" Spare me, but this once!" muttered he with a quavering voice.

" You are past salvation!" replied I laughing, in my natural tone, which he immediately knew, and staring at me with glad surprise, said,

" I rejoice my dear count to see you alive. It was a shocking piece of fun!"

In a few words I told him the story, and pointing at the lady who had fainted, he started up, with all the eagerness of a petit maitre to assist her.

I rallied the scattered varlets, and sent them to their master. The rest of the guests were in the lodge with the marchioness, half dead with fear, and on seeing me come in, instead of some spirit whose visit they dreaded, they joyfully shouted, " Ah! 'tis the count!"

While I was relating the particulars of the business,

business, in bounced Baron Braggart with the revived lady.

" And was the baron with you, too?" asked one of the ladies.

" To be sure," returned I, " he has acted the principal part."

This made the baron imagine I had not related the story; and feigning to receive my answer as a compliment paid to his courage, he made a bow, and with the most impudent assurance, began to relate the occurrence with various alterations and additions of his own. The company with admirable patience heard him to the last, but the marquis being returned, was shocked at the lies he hatched, and beckoning me to follow him into the garden, imparted to me a plan tending to make the baron, after an unpleasant evening, pass a most cheerless night.

C H A P. II.

" PREPARATIONS for this purpose were immediately made, and having been charged by the marquis to give a wink to his consort on my return to the lodge, she seemed perfectly to understand it.

" After supper the baron resumed his rhodomontades, and swore, that neither hell nor all the devils in it should ever frighten him; he protested, that he only threw himself on the ground to frighten me when I came down stairs, that he felt himself highly diverted with our fears, and was only sorry for the lady who had fainted.

" Here our hostess, with admirable *naivete*, observed, that she was by no means such a free-thinker, as some of the company. Being pressed to explain, she assured us, that almost every night, between twelve and one o'clock, there was such a noise in the chapel belonging to the castle, as if it was falling to ruins. Here a loud laugh, which the marquis set up,

up, was re-echoed by the baron with redoubled violence. The latter, probably recollecting that it was past midnight, challenged the company to repair instantly to the chapel. The marchioness, feigning not to pay any attention to what he said, and to be disconcerted at the laugh, declared, that gentlemen might laugh as much as they pleased, but she would lay a wager, that none of them was hardy enough to fetch the fan she had left on her seat in the chapel during the morning service.

" This challenge was followed by a general pause, when the marquis thought proper to break the silence, by assuring his spouse, that he would gladly agree to any bet she should venture to lay, and was sure of there not being a gentleman present, that would not render her the solicited office in that very hour. We all gave it as our opinion, that the marchioness would forfeit her wager, and left her at liberty to choose a champion. Her eyes then petulantly over-run all the company, and whenever she fixed them on the baron, he each time turned pale. Several times,

times, much to his joy, she shammed to fix her choice on me or some other; but terminated after all by selecting the baron. Bound as he was by his parole of honor, he could not be off the bargain. He clandestinely pulled out his watch, and having convinced himself, that it was near upon the stroke of one, cocked his hat with all possible martial grace, and took leave of the company. He had not proceeded quite as far as the lodge-door, when his cockade dropping from his hat over his face, he shrunk back with trepidation, and set us all on a roar. He then collected himself once more, threw the cockade with an air of contempt into a corner, and strutted away.

" We picked it up again, determined to make some good use of it. He was no sooner gone, than the marquis informed the company of his plan, and of the measures he had taken to put it in execution. He then gave the gentlemen their choice to act such parts as they should like. Two of us immediately offered to perform the principal characters, viz. Don Guiacomo Naros, a nobleman of a

gigantic

gigantic size, and Don Romero, who was of a dwarfish stature. The chapel, which served also as a parish church to the adjacent village, was at a good distance from the castle, to which it joined by a subterraneous corridor. The plan being settled and all the parts duly distributed, some of the company followed Braggart, and others to get the start of him, introduced themselves into the chapel through the corridor.

The night was rather dark, but some weak glimpses of the half-clouded stars still enabled one to descry objects at a distance. The baron seemed to stop cautiously before every bush, and slackened his pace on approaching the church-yard wall. At last he opened the gate, and flashing at every cross which projected from the quiet graves with his naked sword. This knightly manœuvre had insensibly drawn him out of the path, and stumbling from one turf over another, he arrived at the chapel not till several minutes after we had entered it by taking a bye way. He had likewise missed the principal gate, and it was almost impossible for him to reach the marchioness's

with violent cracks ; several sheets besmeared with phosphorus swung to and fro, and at last flings thrown about the baron's legs and body, so that he remained as motionless as some enchanted knight.

" At the same time, a thick smoke arose near the altar, which became more and more condensed and voluminous. Dons Giacomo and Romero appeared in the midst of it, in the costume of two devils, and the more terrible, as the gigantic bulk of the former made so great a contrast with the dwarfishness of the latter. The disguise of both was painted with broad stripes of phosphorus, and Don Giacomo also bore on his head a lantern with the following inscription in red letters : " Sinner prepare ; for thou must die!" Don Romero wore the red cockade, which Braggart had thrown away in the garden. They now stretched out their flaming arms to seize the knight of the woeful countenance, who seeing the two devils advance, shut his eyes, and did not open them till a good while afterwards.

" At

" At last the scene was shifted to our mutual horror. The pulpit-door opens, a man drest in a white surplice, armed with a long crucifix, and bearing a lantern in the other hand, appears on it followed by another fellow drest in black.

" It was the curate and the organist, who came from the village, on seeing the blaze and hearing the noise in the chapel. Ignorant of the marquis's scheme they came to take us unawares. We soon recognized the parties, having seen them before, but the two devils who had never beheld them in their lives, took it for a real apparition to punish their incredulousness, and overwhelmed with a sudden panic, rushed out of the gate. The gigantic Naros dropt his lantern, which fell on the little one's face, who deliberately pickt it up and lighting it again, went to follow his companion that waited for him in the church-yard.

" Here a new catastrophe ensued. The curate beginning to read his exorcisms to conjure away the damned goblins, both of them had the curiosity to look back, when

the little devil who preceded the great, quickly turning round, pushed the lantern so violently in the latter's face, as to make him imagine the blow was given him by some spirit, on which he dropt senseless on the ground. Don Romero was so much frightened at the effect he had himself produced, as to leave the lantern on the ground and take to his heels, jumping over crosses and graves, till he unfortunately stumbled over a tombstone, where he also fainted.

" The marquis was now determined to put an end to the business ; he gave his servants the signal agreed on, who taking away the machinery as secretly as possible, each of us stole out of the sacred place, and all met before the principal gate. Our first care was to bring the two devils to life again, and after some previous conversation, we took lighted tapers and returned humming and coughing to the chapel.

" Still the pious priest zealously continued reading his exorcisms, without lifting an eye from the book. The marquis than advanced close to the pulpit, calling out to the reverend

rend gentlemen, "What means all this, Sennor? are you moon-struck, pray?"—It was some time before he would listen to the voice of his lord. At last he looked down into the chapel with visible surprize, and gave a brief account of his holy function. "You had better retire, Sennor," replied the marquis, "and go to bed." The person complied, and we all went to try to revive the woe-lorn knight.

"In him every spark of vitality seemed to be gone. We felt no pulse, no respiration more in the poor baron. Our host already repented his having perhaps carried the joke too far, when Braggart gave some signs of returning life, and opened his bewildered eyes, bawling for help, as he thought himself in the very hands of the goblins. We had much ado to persuade him that it was we who were come in quest of him. It became necessary to have him carried to the castle, and put to bed. He was then quite speechless, but the next day we found him as brisk as ever, telling us that over-

powered by fatigue, he had fallen asleep in the church, and dreamt a very heavy dream."

Here Count Selami concluded his story, which was received with loud bursts of applause, though every one present guessed baron Hompesch to be the hero of it. The latter was now as mute and as choppfallen as in that night, but from prudential motives, he refrained from immediately giving way to his choler.

The drollest circumstance was, that the gigantic Naros was also one of the company, and exclaimed;

" Hang me ! I was devilishly afraid!"

—“ Was you there ?” asked several of the ladies.

—“ To be sure,” added he, “ and the Baron Hompesch was not far off.”

Several loud peals of laughter ensued ; but the baron thought proper to swallow the pill, and wait an opportunity of being avenged of the count, for the mortification he had endured ; and this opportunity presented itself, as will be found, that same morning.

The

Thus ended all the stories of siege and conquest. A little while after the company broke up, Caroline gave the count her hand to help her into the carriage, and we both returned home apparently happy and contented.

C H A P. III.

THE count was wont every night before we retired to rest, to come into my bed-chamber to chat with me, for an hour and lay himself down on the sopha, on which he would frequently fall asleep, when I was obliged to wake and make him go down stairs. This night, however, his head was so full of what had happened, that, forgetting his former habitude, he immediately betook himself to his own apartment on the first floor, which occasioned one of the most ludicrous scenes I ever witnessed.

I inhabited the second story, and the ground floor was occupied by Madame le B**, our hostess, by profession a milliner,

who perfectly well understood her business, and not to leave the least advantage neglected, she let out the premises to single young gentlemen, who had day and night, free access to her apartment. The count and I, discontented with so commodious a method of house-keeping, had already resolved to remove in the course of the ensuing week.

The baron, having visited us shortly after our arrival, was smitten with our hostess, a buxom young widow of twenty-two. He was none of those who would let an opportunity go by unprofited, and hearing of the intended change, he hired and gave earnest for the two floors, which we intended to evacuate, on condition of being put previously in possession of the charms of his future landlady. He this very night paid her one of his gallant visits, when both of them were discovered in the situation I am about to state.

The count, who contrary to custom, had withdrawn to his own apartment, in deep meditation on the occurrences of the night, after being undrest thought it still too soon to go to rest. He therefore threw himself on

on his sofa, to indulge his reveries. His blood was in agitation, and recollecting Caroline, he at last fell into a sweet slumber.

No sooner was he roused from it, by the position which was not the most easy, than half stupified with the effects of sleep he fancied himself in my apartment, took his candle, and cautiously reached the bottom of the stairs, when it went out. He went groping in the dark into the room of the milliner, who was fast in the arms of her gallant. Mistaking her bed for his own, of which he had been in quest, he drew the curtains, undrest himself to his shirt, and was going to put out a candle which had been kept burning, when one of the baron's boots, which unfortunately laid in the way, made him stumble and in falling dropped the candle, which fell burning on the latter's face.

The baron awoke with a roar, and my friend, provoked with the impertinence of so unwelcome an interloper, answered him with an oath, and ran to seek his sword in the corner of his supposed apartment, which

not finding, he rung for his servants so violently, as to break the bell-string.

Meanwhile the baron got out of bed, and more fortunate than the count, found his own sword, which was at the bedside. While the fair milliner was screaming out for assistance, her paramour in his shirt, made up to my friend, who with his breeches in one hand, and the baron's cane in the other, difficultly parried his attacks. The count was an excellent fencer; he now acted on the offensive, and gave his opponent such a vigorous push on the pit of his stomach, as to throw him reeling on the floor, loudly howling for mercy.

The lady perfectly seconded the baron's cries, and thereby roused from sleep all those whom the count's ringing had not yet awakened. Down came soon after a group of half-naked servants, cook, butler and valets, who were joined by our coachmen with their whips. The count's coachman immediately flogged the stranger, who had by this time been permitted to rise, so effectually

fектually as to put an end to all farther contest.

By this time I also entered the room, with a light in one hand and my sword in the other, and conjointly with the count, who had now become sensible of his mistake, made the servants retire.

The lady kept muttering in her bed, and unwilling to put her to the blush, if she was still capable of blushing, my friend made a handsome apology for the accident, and I gave all the assistance I could to the bruised baron, whom, as his dulcinea declared she would not keep him for the remainder of the night we put into the count's carriage, and with great professions of condolence, accompanied him home.

The next day the story which we wished to keep secret, was divulged all over the district, and some persons even congratulated us upon this adventure, which had been variously magnified.

No sooner was Baron Hompesch able to leaye his room, than he sent the count a

C 5 challenge,

challenge, leaving him the choice of arms. My friend generously chose pistols.

Time and place being fixed, the count took leave of Caroline, who by her paleness seemed to prognosticate some mishap, as she rose from the sofa and gave him her hand to imprint on it the parting kiss. My jealousy arose at this scene, and both herself and my friend seemed to notice it.

On the day appointed, we went on horseback to the ground, where we found the baron in readiness. As the combat was to last till the death of either of the parties, each of them brought with him two braces of pistols, which the respective seconds loaded and exchanged.

We then measured the ground, and each took his post. Five rounds were fired, and none of the combatants was wounded. The baron proved so bad a marksman, as to have almost shot me, though I stood at the distance of ten or twelve yards from the count. At the sixth discharge, I called out, "For shame baron, how can you thus tremble?" He was now more lucky than my friend, who

who fell bleeding on the field; when both I and the baron ran to his assistance. The count, speechless, gave him his hand, and beckoned him to fly with all possible speed. The latter was moved, embraced him, and mounting his horse with his second, galloped along. Had my friend fallen on the spot, I had probably tried the remaining brace, and flatter myself, with better success. But the desire of saving occupied me more at this moment, than the wish of avenging him.

I did not think the wound mortal, as the bullet had not penetrated deep enough to effect the entrails. The only thing I dreaded was the effect of the loss of blood. I and my trusty Alfonso, having dressed the count as well as we were able, carried him in our arms to Belle-vue, an adjacent village, where the surgeon, on extracting the lead, and probing the wound, was exactly of my opinion. The result confirmed it, and a few weeks' quietness and regularity produced a perfect recovery.

On our return to Paris, the history of the duel had transpired among our friends, and our lodgings were constantly beset with enquiries, among whom the ladies were the most diligent. Caroline herself, accompanied by an old uncle, was a constant visitor, and rarely left the count's bedside.

It was on this occasion, that my love to the tender visitant increased to such a pitch as to render me superlatively wretched. As soon as my friend grew better, I changed my lodgings to try if absence would not cure me of this hapless passion. The Count had long ago perceived it, and doating himself on the beloved object, gladly consented to my removal. Caroline's conduct had so much changed since I first formed her acquaintance, that I now thought to remark in it a species of coquetry, which made it doubtful which of her two rivals she would prefer at last. She teased me into an illness of near three weeks, occasioned by the fickleness of her deportment, and sealed her sportive cruelty, by making a determinate choice of the Count, who promised her marriage. I loved my friend



friend too much to seek any farther to supplant him in the affections of this changeable female, and bore the effects of my luckless passion with silent murmurs against my untoward fate. During this double contest to conquer my fondness, and to preserve the esteem of my friend, a contest, which lasted five or six months, the count treated me with cold reserve, avoided my company, and ceased to honor me with his confidence. This made me demand an explicit declaration from Caroline, which being given in favour of my rival, I abjured my love, and declaring my real sentiments to him, terminated with regaining his former friendship. We continued as before, to visit the gay circles, and as I told him, that I would return to Spain, after making a tour through some of the French provinces, he promised to accompany me till his marriage, which his bride did not wish to have solemnized for some months to come.

Fernandos and Bernardos continued to share our pleasures, which now began to extend to every kind of dissipation. The expences

pences attending high-life-excesses, beginning to incroach too much on our pecuniary resources, we resolved to dismiss our equipages and all superfluous menial servants, that we might have the more money to bestow upon such amusements as struck our fancy. This appearance of plainness served to introduce us among the lower spheres of people, whose manner of living is not the least fertile in merriment.

Being one night at a masqued ball, we retired at a late hour to one of the lodges adjoining the ball-room to take some refreshments. Rather fatigued with the manifold sports and intrigues, which predominate on such occasions; it was our intention to remain together in that place, and have some cheerful conversation over the sparkling champaign till approaching day-light should put a stop to our libations, and make us retire. The topic having insensibly led me on the Mystic Cabal, I confidentially recounted to my friends, the appearance of my genius Amanuel on Elmira's flight. During my story, the majority of the masks had withdrawn from the

the ball-room, and only a few of them were at times seen to pass by our table from one room into another. All was attention to my tale, and the eyes of my shuddering companions were immovably fixed on my lips.

Towards the conclusion, the Duke of M** who was one of our party, suddenly exclaimed with enthusiastic eagerness, "I wish Don Carlos, I could once see your genius!"—At this moment the company was augmented by one mask, drest in a white domino, who advancing behind the Duke's chair whispered into his ear, "*Here he is!*" The looks of the whole company, who had overheard the stranger were now waiting for the confirmation of this apparition in my countenance, and a deadly paleness immediately afforded it.

The mask, in a peculiar manner opened his cloak,—and indeed I felt it was Ammanuel.

Seeing me thus agitated, Dons Fernandos and Bernardos fallied forth to seize the stranger, who, as nimble as a deer, lost himself among the company in the adjoining supper-

rooms, and eluded all farther pursuit, which, notwithstanding the activity of my friends, and a duration of near two hours, was completely frustrated.

After a stay of six months longer in the metropolis of France I set out with the two above mentioned friends to range in quest of adventure through several French provinces, and Count Selami accompanied us as far as Orleans, where taking leave of me and my companions, he expressed his hopes of seeing us again in Spain, whither he likewise meditated to retire some time after his marriage with Caroline.

C H A P. IV.

FROM Orleans we went to Montpellier, and so fertile in accidents and amorous intrigues was this tour, that it would alone take up a volume to describe them. Many a little town, many a village and hamlet, saw us depart with regret, especially the females, whose relations we had wantonly flattered with

with the idea of marrying their daughters, and settling in their peaceful domains.

From the time I reached Montpellier the incidents of my life began to grow more and more serious. The petulant sports of a loose and unsettled mind now drew to an end. A new matrimonial connexion, great and sacred, was about to be formed, and became productive of the most important consequences. My friends will, with astonishment, see, how the vicious spirit of the ruthless Cabal purified itself in its own fire.

It was in the middle of February, when we reached Montpellier, and the morning on which we approached this delightful city just happened to be not only one of the serenest, but of the most momentous of my life. Every where the almond-trees displayed their luxuriant blossom, and the coverts and meadows appeared clad in tender verdure. The olive inspired hopes and expectation of coming plenty, and the thrills of the soaring lark already cheared the labors of the busy rustic. There lies in the return of the vernal season a warmth and spirit, peculiar to itself, every breath

breath respires soft life, and the fresh air deeply impresses into the human mind the symbol of revived nature.

A beautiful landscape laid before us, bordered by a castle, surrounded with a spacious park and garden, at the foot of a mountain. The rosy clouds of the morning were still mixed with the azure ground of the spreading horizon, which exhibited on its brink a group of rocks and scattered cottages. The castle was very near, and the sun reflected his golden beans from its glimmering windows.

We had now got to the park of the castle, when one of the servants, I don't know whether it was Alfonso or some other, began to relate the history of lord of the manor before us, which he said he had learned at the inn where we put up the preceding night. He described him as the owner of the castle, and as a man whose misfortunes had made him retire from the bustling scenes of the world, to pass his days in misanthropic apathy in this lonely retreat, with Adela de Giraumont, his daughter, a prodigy of beauty, and the admiration

ration of the whole province. She was reported to live in coy reserve, with the count, her father, and to shun all intercourse with the neighbouring young noblemen.

"Giraumont, are you sure this is his name?" said I to the servant.

"I am sure I was told so," replied the man.

"Heavens! I well know the name; should it be the father of the Chevalier de Giraumont, who—"

At these words Alfonso interrupted me, saying, "'tis the same, whose life you saved near Alcantara?"

"Aye, I remember now. He often used to talk to me of his father and sister, and he certainly was born in this province."

I recollect ed with pleasure that meritorious action. The young chevalier was a school-fellow of mine, and being one day bathing in the river near Alcantara, he got out of his depth, and would have been carried away by the rapidity of the stream, had not I, who was a better swimmer, fortunately saved him. He returned afterwards to

France,

France, and I never knew what had become of him.

"Perhaps," said I to myself, "thou wilt meet thy friend here, in the bosom of his family. He always loved thee, and there is no doubt, but he will give us a good reception."

Delighted with these thoughts I was jogging on, when Don Fernandos cried, "Stop Carlos, your saddle is loose! You'll be down in a moment!"

At this instant I was stopping to alight, when a young lady, with a book in her hand, attracted my sight in the garden of the castle, and set my heart in a strong palpitation. She had on a green straw-hat, tied with a white ribband, which floated negligently on her heaving bosom; her complexion was beautiful, and her brown hair descended in ringlets down to her waist; a long white robe covered her slender shape, fastened with a green sash and her hands seemed to rival the alpine snow in whiteness.

Hearing the trot of horses, she lifted her beauteous eyes from the book, and accidentally

tally cast them upon me. A slight blush immediately suffused her lovely countenance, and she stooped to the ground, as if she wanted to pick up something. My horse began to prance, and the saddle not being yet fastened, Don Fernandos again calls out to me, while she startles and turns pale. She then advanced hastily towards the castle, and on her way thither, turned round once more to blefs me as it were, with another view of her charming countenance.

Don Fernandos, who was equally struck with the appearance of the fair stranger, perceiving her turn round the last time, exclaimed with enthusiasm, "Good Heavens!"

It was impossible to speak more sentiment than my friend's exclamation and manner expressed. I was silent, and a thousand emotions of love and tender apprehension agitated my soul. Don Fernandos was aware of this change, and observing me for a minute with pensive astonishment, softly whispered, " Poor Carlos?" He knew the power of a rising passion ; he knew, that I had too much sensibility

sensibility to be happy in love, and strove therefore to stifle it in embryo.

Meanwhile we arrived in the village, and alighted to take some refreshment. Enquiring of the landlord the name and family of the owner of the castle, and finding his account to be the same as that which we had obtained of the servant, I sent the following note to Count Giraumont :

“ My Lord,

“ The Marquis de Grandez, who is now
“ on his way through this village, had once
“ the honor to form an acquaintance with a
“ certain Chevalier de Giraumont, at Alcan-
“ tara. Supposing him to be of your lord-
“ ship’s family, the Marquis makes bold, to
“ ask the favor of paying a visit at the cas-
“ tle.”

“ A Mons. Le Comte de GIRAUMONT.”

The servant was not many minutes gone, before he returned with one of the count’s servants, who delivered a formal invitation from his master for me and my friends to come

come to the castle. The same messenger also acquainted the landlord, that the count had given him orders to remove our horses and luggage from the inn. The landlord came into us, and shaking his head, said, "you must indeed be well recommended to his lordship, for I never knew him treat any gentleman with such civility."

I received the invitation with a kind of rapture, and was going to change my dress, when I found the servants had already carried off our portmanteaus. I was therefore obliged to go in a plain green hunting dress, with my hair, which in my hurry I had forgotten to adjust, hanging rather wildly about my face. Fernandos perceived my embarrassment, "What vanity, Don Carlos!" cried he, "but let me assure you to your comfort you never looked better than you now do."

Arrived at the castle, a gentleman, who seemed to be the count's secretary, received us with every mark of respect, and leading us into a parlour, said he would soon introduce us to his lordship, who was still dressing upstairs.

stairs. The gentleman then withdrew, with a bow, and being left alone, we began to look at the portraits and pictures which decorated the apartment.

"As I know you are much delighted with portraits in gilt frames of exquisite workmanship," began Don Bernardos, "I beg you will come and look at this one!"

I went to that part of the room, where my friend was, to look at the boasted performance, and shrank back with surprize at the first glance I cast on it. It was my own semblance as perfect as in a mirror. I now recollect, that it once had been mine, and that I parted with it in favor of the Chevalier de Giraumont, who, after the accident in the river, always importuned me to let him have it in remembrance of my service.

In the very moment I was thus gazing at the portrait, the old count entered by a side door. I bowed and was going to speak, when he quickly advanced and embraced me, saying :

"I know you Don Carlos, the portrait you have just been looking at will spare me
the

the trouble of any farther explanation. It was you that saved my son's life, and you are now here to receive the thanks of his father, and to deplore with me his early death." At these words tears trickled down the cheeks of the venerable parent.

" How!" exclaimed I, " shall I see him no more?"

" Alas! no," replied the count, " his fate grudged him that happiness. Two years ago, he went with his regiment to St. Domingo, and there fell a victim to the climate." Here the old man paused a few moments, and then pursued: " but you have lost nothing. The father has inherited the friendship of his son, and I find in you the same amiable young man, whom his tender affection has always represented to me. I cannot say that I am partial to mankind in general, but I could wish you to supply his place in my family."

I answered him deeply moved, " that I would use my best endeavours to deserve so much kindness, and had felt a strong affection towards him, from the very instant of our first meeting." He then left me, with seeming reluctance, and said several handsome

things to Fernandos and Bernardos. It appeared, that he had been acquainted with the former's father, while on his tour through France. We soon grew as familiar with the count, as if we had known him for years, and made but one family.

At last, he said, "I will now introduce you to my daughter, who already saw you this morning, and immediately recognized Don Carlos. You see," added he with a smile, "how firmly your image is imprinted in our hearts."

—"All goes well!" whispered Fernandos to me, on quitting the apartment.

"Behold Adela," said the count entering his daughter's drawing-room, "behold Don Carlos, your brother's, and our common friend! He has promised me, to be my son and your brother."

She rose and received us, dropping several low curtsies. She now wore a plain rose-colored ribband, twined with her hair which, with the addition of a little powder, and a black velvet belt buckled in front to a medallion, representing a young man in regimentals whom

whom I immediately guessed to be the chevalier, was all the alteration she had made in her dress.

I could plainly discover, that there was a kind of confusion in her attitudes and deportment. All becomes instinct in an innocent maiden, if she faces the man, whom her heart has secretly chosen. All the powers of art could not have devised and executed a more charming reception, than simple nature afforded here. This confusion was a secret avowal, that her heart wanted no foreign impulse, not even the commands of a respected parent, to do for me that, which she did afterwards. Her mind spoke its meaning in every feature of her face, though rather timorously, lest it might be understood. The original of her sweet illusion, was now conveyed by her own father into her arms, with the request to cherish him as a brother. But will the human heart always contain itself within the prescribed limits?

The father did not quite understand his daughter, nor did he think, that the recep-

tion she gave me answered to the tender friendliness of his wishes.

"How!" began he, "does Adela receive thus coolly the friends of her father, and a brother restored?" Her looks now seemed to teach him better. He led her smiling towards me, "Here," said he, "embrace your sister."

We spent the whole day in ease and happiness. Don Fernandos displayed all his sprightliness to my Adela, and the steady Bernardos ingratiated himself to an astonishing degree with her father, who felt the gravity of my friend's temper congenial to his own.

Towards the evening a walk was proposed in the beautiful gardens of the castle. Adela with the familiarity of a sister laid hold of my arm, and, with a heavenly ingenuousness, pointed out every spot, where she had formerly thought on me. She told me too, that my name was constantly in her brother's mouth, and that he never was tired of loading me with encomiums.

How rapidly did the hours fleet away in such company! Don Fernandos seemed to envy

envy my happiness, and had recourse to all the powers of the art of pleasing to insinuate himself in the good graces of my Adela. The latter deemed him very amiable and frankly told him so. Often have I felt sudden starts of jealousy, but then she would treat me with such tenderness, as to obliterate again every trace of that unhappy passion from my heart.

The count had made us promise to stay with him at least for some weeks, but these were soon commuted into months. By degrees Adela's natural seriousness returned to her mind. The count, old and infirm as he was, still loved the chase, to which Bernardos and Fernandos constantly accompanied him.

Adela and I were fondest of the pleasures of gardening, which afforded us the best opportunity of being undisturbed together. I soon felt, that the part of a brother which the count had allotted to me, became intolerable to my captivated senses. The name of a sister, entitled her to those familiarities which will distract the lover. I found friendship in her heart as well as in her mouth, but neither of them ever betrayed the least symptom of

love. Thus was I tormented with my own sensations, at a period when it only depended on me to have put myself in possession of all the happiness I coveted.

In the evening we generally used to walk in the garden. Once we sat down on a seat made of green sod, where Adela became more and more serious, and even melancholy at last. My own heart was so heavy, that I could not for all the world, have uttered a syllable. We both wept, and knew not why. Adela then laying hold of my hand, exclaimed in a tender tone, "Dear Carlos, your sister's temper makes her very wretched! Well for her if she soon leaves this world; but will you forget her then?"

I answered this question, so abundantly fraught with delicate sentiment, in a vague and inadequate manner. The canker of sadness began to consume the best faculties of my being, and Adela, who perceived it, likewise fretted, and injured her health.

One day, being uncommonly low spirited, I took my fowling-piece and went to hide myself in the thickest part of the adjacent wood.



wood. Dinner time came and I was missing; when I returned to the castle in the evening, I met some servants whom the count had sent in search of me. Having sent them back with a satisfactory answer to their master, I got over the park-wall, and surprized my Adela in a favorite arbor of the garden, in a pensive and melancholy posture. Her thoughts were deeply absorbed in a rose which she would now take from her bosom, now replace it again. She supported herself on my cane, and frequently looked at it. At my approach she was suddenly roused from her reverie, and seeing somebody so near her, would, in her surprize have fallen to the ground, had I not fortunately caught her in my arms.

" My God," cried she composing herself, " where have you been Carlos?" But here another accident happened, I had forced my hunting-piece so violently among the shrubs composing the bower, that on putting my hand to the mouth of the barrel to take it out again, the lock unfortunately cocked among the stems, and the piece being loaded

went off, and almost shattered two fingers of my left hand, while the blood bespattered Adela's face.

Instead of fainting which I expected, she rather grew more collected, and with anxious solicitude stopped the blood with her handkerchief. Having persuaded me to return with her to the castle to have the wounds properly dressed, she embraced me as I rose and with tears in her eyes, asked me, "do you feel much pain, Carlos?"

—“Very little in my hand,” answered I.

—“What, are you wounded in some other part?”

—“Here, Adela, here I feel excruciating pangs,” returned I pointing to my heart.

“—What can it be? Tell it your sister!” pursued she, seizing my hand.

I now described all the feelings of my soul, and this avowal made Adela thus declare herself, “I never thought there could be much difference in my being your sister or your wife. If the quality of a wife attaches to itself a more exclusive right to your love—

here

here is my hand—take it—I'll be what you wish me."

On our return to the castle, we found the count and my friends, who had all been out in quest of me, had come back. They were quite rejoiced to see me again, and lamented the accident that had happened to my hand.

At supper the count seemed to be aware of the great change that had taken place between Adela and me, and partook in our gaiety, till a late hour, when we retired to rest.

Early in the morning, I waited on the count to inform him of what had passed between his daughter and me, and to ask his consent to our union.

"Dear Carlos," answered Giraumont, "you have anticipated my wishes, and I joyfully grant your request with my blessing." In less than a fortnight after Adela was my wife.

C H A P. V.

THE mind of Adela still continued to be serious, and my gaiety insensibly lost itself in her solemn ideas. She was eager to learn my history, and loved to hear me talk of Elmira. She lamented the melancholy fate of this excellent woman, but was soon captivated with the idea of the Mystic Cabal, and admired its spirit and principles. Not a night passed without our talking on this subject, whenever we were by ourselves. Her ingenuous arguments could not reconcile me to a society which had occasioned all my sufferings, but gently removed the reluctance I had conceived for its principles. In point of diversion, Adela always went a hunting, fishing, or walking with us. I was an excellent performer on the German flute, Don Fernandos, the count's secretary, and our servants also understood music, and we formed little concerts, which highly amused my father-in-law. The reading of new publications completed our

our entertainments by dispelling that kind of heaviness which gay townsmen are apt to feel during a long rural seclusion.

It was now autumn, and I wrote to Paris to inform Count Selami of my unexpected marriage in the south ; he sent us a most pressing invitation to spend the winter with him and his Caroline at Paris. We set out and arrived in that capital about the latter end of November.

The political situation of France at this time was very critical, and the revolution of 1789 strongly portended its mighty and wonderful changes. Selami was not perfectly happy with his new-married spouse, and a kind of reserve which predominated in the fashionable circles, made them very cautious in the reception of strangers. We did not spend the winter quite as agreeably as we first expected, and resolved to return to the south early in spring, whence I projected to retire with my Adela to Spain.

About this time Don Fernandos grew very sullen and discontented, whenever he was in company with me and my friends: Deeming

it the natural effect of melancholy, I would not disturb his intercourse with my Adela, in whose presence he always behaved with the utmost propriety and politeness. My spouse satisfied with the knowledge I had of Fernandos, permitted him a free access, and received his attentions as the result of his friendship for us both. Selami and Bernardos endeavoured, however, to check his harmonious intimacy with my spouse, which only served to irritate him. He now sought Adela's company more than ever, and his conduct appearing rather singular, Selami and Bernardos thought it their duty to apprise me of the impressions it had made on them and the public in general. I laughed at their suspicions, but promised them to mention the matter to my spouse, at the first opportunity.

One night having bid her a good night and retired to my chamber to go to bed, she came to me quite dreft, and, with tears in her eyes, held a paper in her hand.

"What have you got there, my dear," said I, ordering Alfonso to withdraw.

"I can

" I can conceal it no longer," replied she; " every farther indulgence for your friend, would be committing a crime against you. No doubt you must have perceived for some time, the oddity of Don Fernandos's conduct. Here is the billet which I this moment found on my toilet table."

She gave it to me, and I read as follows,

" Don't be afraid, fair Adela, of my betraying the secret with which your eyes have entrusted me. Mute joy is the greatest happiness. But supreme love requires expression. Will you receive a vow at eight o'clock to-morrow evening under the great linden tree in the garden; a vow which my heart has long ago taken?

" FERNANDOS."

I knew it immediately to be my friend's hand-writing, and was at first so much overcome with indignation, as to throw myself with such violence into a chair, as made the very walls shake. Alfonso, hearing the noise, came in to ask if I had rung the bell? I answered

fswered "No," in an angry tone, upon which he retired again. Recollecting that he might probably be in the next apartment, I resumed my former composure, embraced my wife, and promised to rid her of the disturber of her tranquillity, without having recourse to any violent extremes. I entreated her, not to make the least variation in her behaviour to Don Fernandos, till the next night, and leave all the rest to my own management.

Adela seemed to quit me with apparent tranquillity, but her heart was far from being easy. She could not help mentioning the whole affair to her father, who communicated it again to Bernardos. The latter promised to be on the spot, and thought it was my intention to send Fernandos the assignation requested, in lieu of my wife.

Such was, indeed, my plan. Fernandos was uncommonly cheerful all day. At eight o'clock in the evening I went to the place of rendezvous, and to my surprise found Fernandos waiting there. He was reading a paper, and kissing it several times, with all the fervor of enthusiasm. No sooner did he

see

see me, than he drew his sword, exclaiming, “ I am villainously deceived ; but thou monster of a man shalt not escape me a second time.”

He then rushed upon me with the naked steel, and being unarmed, I called out to him, “ For heaven’s sake Fernandos desist from your murderous purpose, and hear me ! ” He now stood still, and with a woeful countenance looked up to the skies.

Meanwhile some loud cries are heard behind us ; he looks round and descries Bernardo in the act of falling to the ground, wrestling with a person dressed in white, with a white veil over his face. We both hasten to our friend’s assistance ; the white figure keeps him down, and points a dagger at his heart, while the other hand gags his mouth with a handkerchief. Fernandos, in the first impulse of his fury, runs his sword through the body of my friend’s antagonist. At this moment I recognize my Genius Amanuel, I hastily tear the veil off his face, and my favourite Alfonso lies bleeding at my feet.

At

At this discovery my heart yearned with sorrow, and my friends stood still in mute astonishment. After a long and awful pause, we carried Alfonso back to the castle, put him on a bed, and sent for physical assistance.

"O Fernandos!" cried I, "what have you done?" My friend appeared speechless and absorbed in profound meditation. Alfonso's wound was dangerous, and we all felt it our interest to preserve his life, at least for an hour. I had now reason to expect that the mystic curtain would be drawn, and all the secrets of my life be brought to light.

When Alfonso recovered from his long swoon, his first look was fixed upon me. I felt myself penetrated with all the force of its expressiveness. It was the longing glance of a dying man, that is about to bid an everlasting adieu to his favourite.

The surgeons came, and declared that his wound was mortal. He was himself sensible, that he could not live many hours, and impressed with this certainty, laid hold of my

my hand, kissed it, and said, "My career is terminated, thanks to Don Carlos and his friends!"

This sentence overwhelmed me with the bitterest sensations. Alfonso had always loved me, and I had had numberless proofs of his unshaken attachment to my person. As my Genius, he had extricated me from a thousand dangers, and if he accompanied me by command of the formidable covenant, I was too little acquainted with the latter, to impute it to Alfonso as a crime. All the scenes of the past now rushed upon my fancy. My incomparable Elmira was revived in my mind; it was no doubt Alfonso, who had led me to the possession of that invaluable treasure of a woman. In short, he had been the constant companion of all the struggles, storms, and dangers of my perplexed life.

The next thing that struck me, were the emotions of Adela. She had watched us from the beginning of the catastrophe at a distance, and hastened to join us during the fatal combat. She now conjured the surgeons

geons to employ all their skill, to prolong the life of their agonizing patient at least for some hours, and determined to profit by this respite, to satisfy the thirst of her inquisitive mind, she was more busily employed about him than all the rest of us. What she knew of my history, was a mere problem to her sceptic mind, and she now waited its solution.

The great debility of Alfonso, the profuse loss of blood, and the extreme pain which he felt, had occasioned three successive swoons; each time he had a desire to speak to us. After fainting the third time, he fell into a soft slumber, from which, the surgeons assured us, it would be fatal to rouse him. At their request I ordered all the servants and attendants to withdraw, and leaving the patient to the care of Adela and Bernardos, I followed Fernandos, who had beckoned me to speak to him in private.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

RETIRING to an adjoining room, Don Fernandos, bursting into tears, embraced me, and thus began:—

“ Pardon, O pardon my worthy friend, the man, who hurried away by a long fostered and resistless passion, has now abjured it in the blood of the miscreant, who, by the most mysterious artifice, had flattered me with the perpetration of a crime, inexpiable by its consequences, and a source of everlasting remorse to my misguided heart.

“ You must have perceived how powerfully the charms of your Adela operated on my captivated mind, from the first moment we saw her. You must likewise have been aware, that her condescending familiarity and the indulgence with which you encouraged our intercourse, could not but add fresh fuel to the unhappy flame, which my nature was too weak to stifle in my languishing and too susceptible bosom. As I was

stretched

stretched out in listless thoughtfulness beneath the great linden-tree, I was surprised by the apparition of the same being clad in white whom you call your Genius, and who had eluded our pursuit some months ago at the masked ball. He held a dagger in his hand; I was struck with terror, unprovided with arms, and in a posture, which even denied me the least chance of defending myself from any attack that might have been made upon me. "Hear me Fernandos," whispered the being, in gentle accents, "I am not your enemy, though you once sought my life. You love Adela, and I am sure that your passion will be crowned with all the success it merits, if you send her an assignation to meet you at eight o'clock tomorrow night, near this spot." I was deeply studying what answer I should make, when the Genius, profiting by my reverie, stole away, and suddenly disappeared.

"I obeyed the treacherous summons, and repairing in due time to the appointed place, found instead of Adela, a man, and mistaking him for the impostor, was going in

in the rage of my disappointment to plunge my sword into his body, when recognizing your voice, I stood motionless, abashed and confounded. Soon the cries and struggles behind me, roused me from stupefaction, and kindled my vengeance. Seeing our friend Bernardos engaged with the traitor who had thus tempted and betrayed me, I flew—attacked, and laid him low. Had I known it was Alfonso, I would have spared his life; but what is done cannot be undone. He sought the life of Bernardos, and I flew him to save my friend. It is homicide, justified by the first principles of self-defence, and I thank God! that neither my conscience nor the laws can charge me with premeditated murder. I pity the fate of Alfonso, as much as I deplore the passion which has hitherto chained my reason, and benumbed every virtue which formerly ruled my mind. I abjure my errors, and in commiseration to the foibles of our nature, hope, you will not deny me your pity and forgiveness. To avoid the very shadow of future inducements to my criminal error

I am

I am resolved to quit Paris in a few days, and renounce the intercourse with the friend of my youth, and the rest of a company, that I shall never cease to remember with affection and respect."

I embraced my friend, exclaiming deeply moved, "dear Fernandos, all is forgiven?"

This moment Adela came to tell us Alfonso wished for our immediate attendance. Our curiosity made us instantly comply, and we hastened back, in eager expectation of a speedy disclosure of the most important secrets.

Bernardos had raised Alfonso from his pillow, he surveyed us all with an eloquent mien, then applying his hand to the wound, which seemed to give him great pain, he fixed his eyes towards Heaven. His countenance appeared entirely changed, and I hardly knew him again.

"I thank you, madam," began he, laying hold of my wife's hand, "I thank you for your kind care; I thank you even for the cause of my approaching dissolution, and still more for your fidelity to your husband.

I hope

I hope and pray, you will always give him reason to rejoice in his future happiness."

Adela was silent. Perhaps she know not what to answer, nor understood his meaning.

" My moments are counted," pursued he after a short pause, " and I feel it, that those which still remain, are but a few. My papers will teach Don Carlos the whole series of the vicissitudes of my eventful life. I left them at the villa near Alcantara, in a little box, in the room which I inhabited on the groundsel. You will find the key of it in my portmanteau, with some papers relative to our covenant. Ah! Carlos, how I lament, that this should be the reward of my love, of my fidelity, my more than human tenderness to you. It was I that received you an infant from your mother's lap; have you never heard of Count Diego de Lascara?"

" I have heard of such a man," replied I, " he is my uncle, my mother's brother, formerly governor of Seville."

" Then I am he," continued Alfonso; " I am that uncle, who renounced all the gifts

of

of fortune and affluence, to follow and protect my dear nephew, in this humble disguise. Your mother vowed to your grandfather whom a long train of misfortunes had driven to become the second chief of the mighty Covenant, to leave her first-born under the influence of our order, and I promised to be your guide and Genius ere you beheld the light. Our designs were your happiness, I swore it solemnly to my late sister, whose love to you could never exceed mine. I lived for my Carlos, and now I die for him!"

"Dear uncle," cried I, "now I recognize your benefits, but it is too late to shew you my gratitude!" At these words, which tears and sobs would scarcely permit me to articulate, I embraced him with tenderness and gloomy despair.

Adela, Fernandos and Bernardos seemed equally touched, and Fernandos kneeling asked my uncle's pardon.

"Be not afflicted, young man," continued Don Diego, "though you have killed him who only wished to preserve you from danger,



ger, still he sees his blood spilt cheerfully, as it will doubtless reclaim you to the path of virtue, from which you began to swerve. I feel myself very faint, and am unable to expatiate long on the mystery of this unhappy night, but in justice to you all, will briefly relate some particulars.

" The most sacred duty of our Covenant, is, to protect our unexperienced members, and to chastise conjugal infidelity, especially in wives and their seducers. The crime of adultery has risen to an alarming height in this degenerate age, the laws instead of preventing tend rather to encourage it, and thousands of husbands bewail the consequences of that baneful and detested crime. Friendship is now but an empty name, and under its mask the artful seducer generally succeeds in his diabolical purpose. My Carlos has always shewn too much kindness to friends, and unless he attends to this salutary lesson, by tempering with caution the confidence he reposes in them, he will split upon that rock. It was I, who have promoted his union with Adela, whose con-

stancy and virtues will, I hope, never vary. Circumstances have induced me to put her fidelity to the test ; I have tried the experiment, and must alone bear the cost. I overheard Bernardos, in a secret conversation, tell his confidential servant, that he would certainly kill the presumptuous man, who had dared to rival the affections of his friend. Attempting to prevent the mischief, I watched his motions at the place of rendezvous, and in saving Fernandos's life, lost my own by the latter's hands. Adela has proved herself worthy of my nephew, the accident has made Fernandos repent his error, and I trust, that my unmerited fate will confirm Bernardos in his attachment to the duties of friendship, and make him detest all perfidy and dissimulation under the mask of domestic familiarity.

“ As to my Carlos, he has entertained false notions respecting the motives which guide the Cabal, for I was at its head, and introduced him into its bosom. To make him great, without promoting his virtue and his happiness, could never have been my intention.

intention. I was master of the circumstances, but accidents I could not control. On your account contentions have arisen among our brethren; I have saved Elmira; and the deceitful female who wanted to usurp her place, has perished by the measures I took. I kept you out of Spain, Carlos, as soon as I found the majority of my brethren against you. The fictitious murder was doubtless their own contrivance. Don Pedro had sworn your ruin, and Francisca was to accomplish it. This Don Pedro was a traitor, he is now gone; your friends and mine have the majority in the Cabal, and you risk nothing to return among your brethren."

" My dear uncle!" exclaimed I sobbing.

" You need not be afraid, Carlos," returned he: " you are among friends and confidants. Make them acquainted with the value of our mystic society, when you shall once be fully penetrated with its real spirit. Though I have not gained the salutary end of my painful and laborious career, yet all my existence has been devoted to extricate you from the multifarious dangers in which your



impetuous and airy temper threatened to involve you. Oft have I saved you from absolute perdition, and now leave you without a guide. Your Genius transmigrates to another world, but keep the lessons of foresight and moderation which he now gives, carefully stored in your memory, nor let any opportunity go by, without profiting by their wholesome practice."

At this interval Counts Girumont and Selami, who had left us immediately after my uncle's wound had been dressed, entered the apartment, accompanied by a commissary and some police officers, to take my uncle's deposition, that he had come fairly by his death. He signed a declaration to this purport, and saved Fernandos from all criminal pursuit, which would otherwise have been commenced against him.

The commissary having withdrawn, Don Diego embraced us all, and gave his blessing to me and Adela. He added, in presence of all our friends, that he had made a will constituting me or the issue of my body, sole heirs to his estates in the district of Seville, observing

Observing that this will would be found among his papers at my seat near Alcantara.

He now began to struggle with the last agonies of death. "My eyes grow dim," cried he, with a deep groan, "my sight vanishes—Farewell Carlos.—I leave you my whole soul!—Farewell Adela,—Farewell all!"—At these words a slight cough drowned his speech, and he instantly expired.

Two days after we buried his remains in the cemetery of St. Sulpice, and the Spanish Ambassador and several Spaniards of distinction followed him with due solemnity to the grave.

I now saw the reason, why my mother, on receiving the news of my assassination, had made the then obscure Alfonso, heir of the whole bulk of our fortune.

C H A P. VII.

Less than a fortnight subsequent to this catastrophe, Don Fernandos took leave of me and Adela, and retired with her father

to Montpellier, where he died some time after, in consequence of the bursting of a blood vessel occasioned by a fall from his horse, while hunting with my father-in-law. I shall ever regret him, as notwithstanding his frailties, he was a most amiable and steady companion, and the friend of my youth.

I searched my uncle's portmanteau, and found in it the key to the box which was said to contain the documents of the history of his life, and some writings relative to the Mystic Cabal. The latter I took great pains to study, but could not unravel the spirit of their contents, which I consigned to Don Bernardos, who eagerly promised to peruse them, and communicate such discoveries as his knowledge should enable him to make.

My Adela felt an irresistible desire of being associated with the Covenant, whose projects she conceived to be of the most attractive nature. My adventures were constantly the object of her conversation.

"O my



"O my love," exclaimed she one day,
"how inconceivably blind have you been!"
—"How could I help it?" replied I,
"I was completely in the dark, and they
even put my thoughts in confusion."

—"You was mistaken, Carlos. Me-thinks, that the declaration of your principles alone rendered you worthy in the eyes of the Cabal. They proposed to you the perpetration of the most horrid of crimes, only that they might try whether your mind was incorruptibly honest. It must surely have been a mere scheme to make them acquainted with the real sentiments of your heart, and the bold display of these alone procured your admission. I dare say, you accuse them wrongly of being regicides."

—"May be so. For it is a maxim of theirs, "*That the great and the good—may live free under any form of government.*"

—"I confess, Carlos, that I cease to be a woman, if I reflect on the events of your life. There is something more than human in it. Alfonso's papers must be extremely interesting."

—“ Those which he brought with him hither, are mystic, and too abstruse to be studied with success in a gay city. Next spring we visit Spain, and rural seclusion will doubtless be more propitious to our enquiries.”

“ Bernardos is certainly one of the league; I long to be initiated in its mysteries; and am rejoiced your friends predominate again in its councils.”

Thus Adela prepossessed me more than ever in favor of the Cabal, and we agreed between ourselves, to make sure of the confidence of Bernardos, who seemed to be more acquainted than myself with the operations of the covenant of my brethren. He was always poring on the papers left by Alfonso, and his natural gravity and earnest reserve increased every day.

The period now came, which we had fixed for our return to Spain, and the sudden death of Don Antonio whom I had entrusted with the chief management of my estates, served in a great measure to accelerate it. We therefore took leave of Adela’s father and the rest of our friends, and arrived with Don Bernardos

-dos at Alcantara after a journey more expeditious than pleasant.

I found all my possessions in good order, and returned immediately to the villa, to take charge of the papers left by my uncle. The room in which he said they had been deposited, was strictly searched, but neither the will nor the smallest fragment of the writings alluded to could be found. My diligence was such, that I left not a corner all over the house unsearched, but still without success. I had no reason to doubt my uncle's veracity, and began to suspect, that the papers must have been stolen. Upon the strictest enquiry among the servants, it appeared, that Don Pedro's confidential valet had inhabited that part of the premises, by permission of Don Antonio, as at the time of the former's departure he was prevented by an illness of several weeks, from accompanying his master to Mexico. That man had quitted the villa only three months before my arrival, and was gone to Cadiz to embark for South America. As his character had always appeared fair and honest, my deceased friend, who had no

suspicion of so precious a deposit being concealed in the place, thought it worthy of his beneficence to afford a temporary home to a poor menial, who found himself destitute of a home, and incapacitated by disease from seeking one at a time, when his master's mansion was sold to a stranger. Strong as my suspicion was, I had no prospect of redress, and was consequently obliged to put up with my severe loss. The history of Don Diego's life would have been far more agreeable to me, than the bequest of his property at Seville, which was legally confirmed to me, on the deposition made by Count Selami and Don Bernardos, in whose presence he had constituted me his heir.

On searching the villa, I discovered several secret passages and communications, which my Genius could have used with safety for the execution of his plans. Since my Antonio's death the garden had been neglected, not a single favorite spot remained to put me in mind of my past happiness, and the very streamlet I used to strew with rose leaves, was choked up with mire.

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It was as if every thing warned me to prepare for new important events. I insensibly began to indulge my former melancholy, and Adela being naturally inclined to it, contributed all she could to its progress. Her ideas of the Mystic Cabal seemed to be more enlarged, and the grave Bernardos, always in deep study, flattered her with a speedy accomplishment of her wishes. Had it not been for Adela, I would never have returned to the society of my brethren ; and if I did, it was only that she might likewise be made a member.

One morning, Bernardos, with uncommon cheerfulness, informed us, that it was his intention to introduce us both to the Covenant in the evening of the next day. My spouse almost fainted for joy, and each beat of her heart loudly expressed the eagerness of her sanguine expectation.

The long-wished hour arrived, and we all three set out on horseback, and traversed the awful forest. I pointed out Jago's hovel to Adela, and though a lively picture of past occurrences renewed itself in my mind, yet I

did not feel the least apprehension, and was as unconcerned as possible. Adela, possessed as she was of a masculine spirit, could not help being agitated at the moment of the unravelling of a scene which had so long pre-occupied her mind. We did all we could to invigorate her wavering courage, but our efforts were of little use ; her face would change color twice or thrice in a minute, and she was scarce able to support herself upright on horseback.

Don Bernardos, by a much easier way than that my old guide used to take, led us through the corridor into the assembly of my mystic brethren. The venerable chief embraced me and Don Bernardos, and consenting with the rest of the society to Adela's reception, she took the oath in the usual manner.

A fête was then given which lasted all night, and represented the celebration of the Eleusynian Mysteries. A long procession of priests and priestesses began to file off, and the latter were drest in white transparent robes, their hair hung down in natural curls, and garlands

garlands decorated their head. Among the number of those women, who carried the covered mystic baskets, I instantly despaired Rosalia. She eyed me with a soft mien, and tears bedewed her cheeks. She then cast a look expressive of reconciliation upon my spouse, who perceiving me rather in emotion, laid hold of my hand, and asked me what was the matter. I only answered her with a sigh. Bernardos now made us join the procession, and seemed indefatigable in his attention to my wife. I don't know how it happened, but among all persons present, I was the coolest and most sober partaker of the festivities of that night. In the midst of tumultuous rejoicings a secret fit of jealousy entered my heart. I saw Adela, quite intoxicated with pleasure, signalize herself by her forwardness before all other women; methought, she paid less attention to me than to any other man, and in a very strange manner seemed to wish to attract the looks and seize the hand of Bernardos. I knew she had at all times been rather partial to the latter, whose prudence and solid talents

the

she often praised and extolled. Bernardos's uncommon efforts to please Adela and wholly to engross her regard at this fête, could not therefore but give me umbrage. Every trait of levity which my wife had formerly displayed in her conduct, every weak moment of hers, now powerfully returned to my mind. The solemnities of the night appeared to me like a miserable farce, and my imagination was utterly distracted. Rosalia's modest and touching deportment heightened my confusion, and renewed the bitterest recollections. I felt my face as cold as ice, and it seemed as if all the blood were thronging back to my heart; the starting tear now engaged the eyes of every marvelling bye-stander, especially those of Rosalia. This only served to overwhelm me entirely, I began to totter, threw myself on a seat, and immediately fainted.

Some drops of water, sprinkled in my face, soon made me recover my senses. Every body was eager to lend me his assistance, and Rosalia stood the foremost to hasten to my relief. I anxiously looked out for Adela, and found her at a good distance from me, by
the

the side of Bernardos, or rather leaning on him, and quite lost in deep conversation. She had not even taken notice of my indisposition, and being ultimately told of it, cast such a cold look upon me, as fully benumbed my affection. It certainly was an instance of unpardonable neglect, all my pride was excited, and I resolved to make her expiate the unkindness of her conduct. "Is this the same Adela," said I to myself, "who bore me in her heart before she knew me? Who, that sees her now, can say she is the same?"

The mystic ceremonies being ended, my indignation was wound up to the highest pitch, by the continual indifference of Adela, who feigning to be perfectly ignorant of what had happened to me, went on whispering to Bernardos and favoring him exclusively with her conversation, probably with a design of curing me in this manner of all jealousy, or preparing for an explanation after our return home.

Poor woman! How little was she acquainted with my real character? It would have been easier to tame a furious lion than me in
my

my anger. Don Bernardos, who had had more frequent opportunities to study the peculiarities of my character, seemed to entertain some secret apprehensions of my being very much irritated, and no doubt advised Adela to submit, but she was determined to have her own way.

We left the society, and rode back to the villa. I never said a word to my wife, and my heart was full of bitterness and gloomy dissatisfaction. I began to give vent to my sadness by fetching a deep sigh, when Don Bernardos beckoned Adela, who stopped her horse, and led it more to my side of the way.

"What means this change, Don Carlos?" began she after a long silence, and in a tone of voice not the most gentle.

"There's no change, Madam, that I know," answered I with a blunt and severe harshness, proceeding from the heart. She now appeared to me as if I had never known her. My mind was made up, and I did not much care for any thing that was to follow.

She

She had never heard a harsh word from my mouth, and felt herself much disconcerted. She seemed to wish for Bernardos's advice, but he probably had none to give, and she, like one that has a bad conscience, began to screen her damped courage, under the mask of assurance.

"What answer," returned she, "from the mouth of Don Carlos? What ails you? What can be the matter with you?"

— "Nothing, Madam, I have told you so already."

She now relented, and wanted to try what softness would do. "What ails my dear?" cried she with an artfully tremulous voice, and presenting her hand to me, "Does he know me no more?"

She was actually like nothing in my eyes. When the senses are once freed from love's enchantment, the heart is but little apt to give way to the illusion. I beheld this petty scene with cold indifference, shook her hand like that of some old acquaintance, and then let it go again, though she wanted to hold me fast with one finger.

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This polite and firm indifference; which was kept within proper bounds, offended her to the last degree. In the first emotion of her choler she violently spurred her horse, and keeping it back, the animal pranced, and would have thrown her, had I not seasonably alighted and caught her in my arms.

Meanwhile the horse ran off without its rider, and Don Bernardos galloped on to overtake it. Adela had fainted in her fright, and having relieved her with the smelling bottle, I put her on my own horse, and led it by the bridle.

"Excuse me Madam," added I, "for taking the bridle, because I really think you don't now ride so well as you used to do."

This remark penetrated deeply into her heart, and she did not answer it. But I saw that her bosom glowed with rage, and she could but difficultly draw breath. I never opened my mouth again till we arrived at the villa, and leading the horse to the gate, I walked on slowly, without favoring her with a single look. On our arrival before her apartment, I said to her, "Though the morning



morning is far advanced, yet, I suppose, you will go to rest." At these words I let go her hand, and abruptly left her, without waiting the reply for which she had already opened her lips.

She was vexed, and shut the door of her apartment with loud impetuosity. I went to refresh myself in the garden, and heard Don Bernardos return soon after with Adela's horse. He anxiously enquired after her, but she begged to be excused from receiving his visit. He then went away, without troubling himself the least about me.

C H A P. IX.

I WAS not a little embarrassed at choosing a proper method of treating Adela. The honor of a husband is a delicate thing, which the foolish and unjust world makes depend on the conduct of a wife. I thought it would be best for me to live with her on a polite but reserved footing, receive Don Bernardos with all my former kindness, but watch carefully



fully all his motions. This was, no doubt, a very reasonable plan, but it would not suit with Adela's violent temper, which could not bear indecision or suspense, and demanded an explanation, with such zeal, as if the happiness of her whole life depended on it. I am certain that the poor creature had not then divided her affections, and fully conscious of having done no harm, she was inwardly proud of her innocence, and charged me with injustice. I at first suspected, lest Rosalia's looking at me with such tenderness, should have induced my wife to act the part of unbecoming familiarity with Bernardos, in order to be revenged of me; but finding she would not receive his visits, I thought it a sure sign of her having perfectly guessed my meaning, and of her wishing only to give me to understand, that Bernardos had not importance enough for her to let him obtrude upon her pensive and melancholy moments.

I repaired to the dining-room at the usual time. Adela suffered me always to wait a good while, but having twice sent her word dinner was ready, I ordered the servants in waiting

waiting to serve up, and sat down with a keen appetite. So much was I changed, as hardly to know myself again. A twelve-month before, I would have been quite distract ed under similar circumstances, and unable to swallow a bit. I thought no more of Adela, and made a hearty meal with the greatest ease and composure in the world.

The first course had just been taken away, when Adela's woman entered the apartment to apologize for her mistress's not coming to dinner. I desired her to tell the cook to lay the cloth in her own room. It was well I said no more, for that very moment my wife made her appearance. She either repented the message, or followed the servant to hear my answer. I returned her slight curtsey without rising, and fell to the bottle. She sat down on her chair, and spread her napkin, waiting for some time, probably to see if I would offer, or help her to something. But I was too much busied with myself for such a thought to have come into my head. I hardly took the trouble to cast a quick glance upon her between whiles. She fixed her eyes

eyes stedfastly on her plate, and appeared quite pale and ruffled.

At last she thus began, "It seems, you have made a very good dinner, Don Carlos?"

"Very natural I should." Here I beckoned the servants to retire. "You know I have not slept all night, and passed all the morning in the garden to conquer my fatigue; but you seem indeed to have lost your appetite. Why, you look quite pale, Madam? I hope last night has not hurt you?"

"To all appearances, very much Don Carlos."

"What, is it possible! But that is the way of the world. We can taste no pleasure without some bitterness in it."

Adela was dumb, and seemed quite surprised at my good humor and loquacity.

"Astonishing," resumed I, "are the changes incident to human life. Last night nobody was more pleased with herself and every stranger, nor more sprightly and eager than the same Marchioness de Grandez, who now sits before me mute, pensive, pale—and without

without the least appetite. Who could even suppose your Ladyship to be a native of France?"

Here she put her handkerchief to her face, probably to hide a tear. Her face was now of a glowing red, and her eyes began to sparkle.

"Good God! Madam," cried I with feigned surprise, "you have surely got the fever! Do you wish for a tumbler of water?" Here I pushed back my chair, and rose.

"Don't trouble yourself my Lord," returned she, with affected gentleness, while her whole frame was convulsed with rage; she then added, "your Lordship may believe me, that you would be the last person of whom I would accept such an office."

—"Then I will ring a servant." I rung and the man came. "Go to my desk and fetch me a phial full of red powder, which stands on the right hand. Go, make haste!"

"There's no farther occasion for it," returned the marchioness, beckoning the man to withdraw. "Was it perhaps poison, my Lord?" continued she, with a bitter smile.

I was

I was transported with fury at such an insolent and mortifying question, when, fortunately recollecting the part I had resolved to act, I exclaimed, after a short pause—“Poison, Madam? a man of sense might draw many fine inferences from such a question. He might, for instance, think you swayed by quite different principles, and wholly corrupted by the spirit of a certain society.”

“ Is that all that makes you so punctilious?” pursued she. “ Is that all Marquis? who was it then that first made me acquainted with that spirit?”

“ Do you think it is I, Adela? Look at the panes of these windows. You see the word Elmira, a sacred word, inscribed on them. This is brittle glass and has resisted storms and tempestuous weather; but my heart is as solid as marble, from which time itself can efface nothing.”

She perfectly understood me and shrank a little, I know not why; either she envied Elmira, or dreaded her fate. The first passion of the heart is always the most powerful, and

and she might also have grieved at my recollecting it.

" You are in the right," replied she, " it is very difficult to efface ancient and strong impressions."

It appeared, as if she wished me to digress from the main subject.—" I did not allude to you, madam," interrupted I. " It was only meant to the society to whom you now seem totally to belong. You accuse me of introducing you to it, but nothing can be falser. No man could be more disgusted with it than I was before our marriage. That society always wrested me from the hands of persons most dear to me, only because they did not suit their plans, and made me form connexions with others, whom I never loved, because by this means they succeeded in their wishes."

" Do you allude to me in this point?"

—“ My remark is general. But I was born free, Madam, and it is insupportable to be under foreign control.”

—“ Who subjected you to it?”

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“ Can

"Can you ask such a question in good earnest? In the first instance my unhappy fate which, after bereaving me of all that was dear, I had the good fortune to distance. And afterwards you, madam."

—"What I, marquis?" This she spoke rather elated.

—"Yes, you!" answered I, in a pet. "Only remember your secret conferences with your friend, Don Bernardos, and your frequent contests with me. What good can there be expected, if a married woman go to study mysteries with a man that has no business with her; if she form an hundred dangerous connexions, neglecting to cultivate domestic happiness, and swerving hourly from the duties of her character and station? I despair of the consequences."

Adela, who had petulantly provoked me to give her this reproof, now began to melt in tears. Her sobs made but little impression upon me. My heart had now grown obdurate, and I firmly believed, that with the features of ingenuousness and serene innocence she disguised no small share of artifice. "But," added I morosely, "my remarks are quite general,

general, so you need not apply them to yourself in particular."

—“ Is this, Don Carlos,” answered she wiping off her tears, “ the result of my tender love of you? Is this ill-treatment the reward you bestow on my candor and sincerity ?”

I was quite vexed at this unseasonable and improper reply.—“ Pray,” cried I in a pet, “ what name do you give to these slight hints which, as your very good friend, I have taken the liberty of giving you? Ill treatment, madam?—The Marchioness de Grandez is, I believe, the last person in the world, that has reason to complain of such on the part of her husband. Your expressions are most pointedly harsh.—But, excuse, my lady, the great freedom I take. Nobody is more capable than yourself of rightly judging your own conduct. I have always placed an illimitied confidence in your good understanding, and you will doubtless always recollect, that your own honor depends on the preservation of mine.”

F 2

—“ And

—“ And what is there so very objectionable in my conduct, as to put you at a loss to guess its motives? I really hope, you are not jealous of Don Bernardos?” These words were accompanied by a sneer, which rendered her quite detestable in my eyes.

—“ Madam, I recognize here your national character. But you should know, that I am a real Briton on such a subject. Were you but my mistress, I would only require of you not to put my health in danger. But, since I have honored you with the rank of my spouse, I must insist on your not letting any one but myself remark the foibles of your heart.”

A smack of her lips was all the answer she made. At any other time I would have thought it very pretty; but I understood what her pride, which I was designedly occupied with humbling, wanted to express by it. She fell in a profound reverie, but without waiting for the desert, I rose, bowed, and retired.

I now thought of letting matters rest just as they were. I firmly believed it impossible,

that

that Adela should in so short a time be so entirely corrupted. A cunning woman will seldom transgress farther, when she knows herself closely watched by an attentive observer. Nothing but the most fiery passion would attempt to break this boundary, and that was probably not yet so deeply rooted in the marchioness's heart. Perhaps too much fondness on my part could have rendered me indifferent to her, or too much artfulness and flattery on that of Bernardos have led her astray. I began to conceive some hope, that the hints I had given her would again put her in the right way, and restore the harmony which formerly subsisted between us,

But I was utterly deceived in my conjectures, and ere a quarter of an hour elapsed, found an opportunity to discover my mistake. I was still on the stairs, when I heard the marchioness noisily throw open the dining-room door, and call loudly to a servant, " If to-day, to-morrow, or after to-morrow Don Bernardos should enquire for me, tell him I am not at home."

I felt all the smartness of this blow, before I had time to meditate upon it. I was about to run among the servants and revoke the orders of their mistress, in her own presence, but sensible, too, that such a step would only tend to magnify the imprudence she had committed, and expose us both to the scandal of every domestic.

The more I considered this circumstance, the more was I shocked at its latent meaning. Adela was extremely irritable, she found herself much offended by me, and nothing could be more certain, than that some secret understanding subsisted between her and Don Bernardos. I had several times remarked their fly winks and furtive conversations, but I safely concluded from their imprudence, that the business had not yet come to a decisive crisis. Thus it could not be expected, that Adela should sacrifice her friend to the mere suspicions which had taken possession of my mind, and to make good such a public dismission, she must necessarily have known of some clandestine issue. I was pretty confident of their carrying on a secret correspondence, in which I naturally was

was the object of their abuse, and perceived in it the certain basis of all the contumacy of my wife, and of all the symptoms she had hitherto betrayed of her inward disaffection.

As I had never deserved such sentiments, I could not but ascribe them to the intriguing artifices of Don Bernardos. Had I not been possessed of such an incredible deal of pride, had I still loved the marchioness as well as I did before that unhappy night, it would have driven me to distraction. But now I considered rather coolly my circumstances and my resources.

In order to make a definitive settlement of my plan, I strove to wheedle her into farther confessions. Under various pretences I wanted to speak to her, but she always was busy, and begged to be excused. From this I inferred, that she was writing. Don Bernardos came in the evening. I observed Adela's favorite woman, whom I had long before suspected, receive and ask him into her own room. There she either acquainted him with what had happened, or delivered some letter or note from her mistress. In a little

while Bernardos returned to the yard, mounted his horse, and pensively jogged along.

This made me come to a final resolution. My intention was either to carry Adela back to France, or put her in a convent. Nevertheless I thought proper to take the advice of a particular friend of my mother's at Alcantara. I called my valet and bade him give directions to the groom to keep my horse ready for a trip to Alcantara, by twelve o'clock the next day. I did so, that the marchioness might hear of it, and prevent in time the execution of my plan, if she could suspect its actually being in agitation. However necessary this step appeared to me, I still found it extremely unpleasant, and would, owing to a concurrence of various circumstances, fain have abandoned it.

At supper-time, I ordered the cloth to be laid in my bed-chamber. On those occasions Adela would join me; but for this night, having previously sent me an invitation to her own room, which I waved with an apology, I heard from her no more. How frail is the heart of man! This trifling incident occasioned me a quite restless night. An hundred

dred times I felt myself tempted to rise and pay her a visit ; yet the bare uncertainty of the reception I should meet with kept me back. I dressed myself, walked up and down the room, then threw myself again on the bed, lamenting the loss of Adela's affections, cursing my fate, Don Bernardos, and myself. The night glided away with such follies, and had the morning not brought me to my senses, I don't know how all would have ended at last.

But my delirium evaporated, in proportion to the increasing light. Having put every thing in readiness for my projected journey to France, I gave proper instructions to my confidential valet, not to lose sight of the marchioness, to whom I now sent word, that I was going for a day or two to Alcantara. I took my hunting-piece with me, mounted my horse, and rode off without any attendants.

Turning out of the yard, I took it into my head, to look behind me once more. The marchioness was on the balcony, and looking after me. She seemed as blooming and as fresh as the vernal rose. Pleasure sat

dazzling in her eye. She still had on her night-dress, and wore just such a hat with a ribbon of the same color, as on the morning when I first saw her in the garden of her father's castle. This remembrance forcibly struck and affected my sensibility. I gave her a signal of adieu by waving my handkerchief, she returned it with a slight motion of her hand, but before I had fully passed the gate, returned to her apartment.

This fresh token of indifference and slight estimation made me very much inclined, instead of going to Alcantara, to turn back immediately, order the carriage out, and set off for France with the marchioness that same day. I thought it however my duty first to consult my mother's friend, in so delicate a business.

On my arrival in town, I waited on the lady, but had the mortification to find her in the country on a visit from which she was not expected for several days. I then went to my own house, ordered dinner, visited some acquaintances, and towards evening mounted again to ride back to the villa.

It

It was almost dark when I reached the little back-gate of my park, where I alighted, opened the door with my master-key, tied the horse to a tree, resolved to send a servant to lead him to the stable, and advanced through the myrtle grove towards my mansion, which I entered seemingly unperceived.

In my spouse's bed-room, which opened upon the garden, there was no light, and a deadly stillness reigned all over the place. I thought she had already gone to rest, but on getting up stairs, I could hear a great deal of bustling in the kitchen, and to and fro in the apartment.

I do not know what made me steal so slyly into the house. Whether it was mere curiosity to see how my family affairs were conducted in my absence; or whether the human mind harbors certain secret presentiments respecting futurity, enough. I shook and trembled like an aspen-leaf without knowing why. Every moment I dreaded a discovery of some unpleasant object. Still I recollect myself, and was just on the

point of going into my apartment, when seeing the marchioness's front-room wide open, I descried a certain questionable glare, through the suite of her apartments, proceeding from her drawing-room.

I'll bid her good night, said I to myself. She probably would conceive a thousand unfavorable thoughts at your getting thus clandestinely into the house. I now entered her apartment and found nobody in it. Two lighted candles, with long unsnuffed wicks stood on the table. "Where can she be?" said I, "I hope she does not run about in the evening air. Imprudent thing, she will not be quiet till she brings on herself some bad fever."

I sit down, patiently waiting her return. But I soon perceive, that I am sitting on something. I rise, I look,—'tis a man's hat. In the first hurry of confusion, I take it to be my own, but a diamond loop and button convince me of its belonging to Don Bernardos. My first motion is, to fling it with great force on the floor, and trample upon it. I then take one of the lighted candles

from

from the table, and impelled as it were, by instinct, run into Adela's bed-chamber.

But her bed was empty, and without the least traces of any person's having lain on it. I composed myself a little, and returned softly and slowly to the drawing-room, put the candle from where I took it, replaced the hat, and waited a little longer. Hearing a rustling as if somebody approached, I hid myself in a corner of the room behind a large screen, and pierced in haste the canvas with the bayonet of my gun, that I might be the better able to observe all that was to go forward in the place.

Immediately after Don Bernardos entered, hand in hand with the marchioness, whom he led to the sopha, removed the table that stood before it, and sat himself down by her side. Had I had the least belief in enchantments and metamorphoses, I would have taken this for some fairy scene. Both of them were amazingly altered.

Adela was all life and fire. Her fair face had never expressed such vivacity. My blood boiled, yet I could not help gazing on this
scene

scene with wonder. The gauze which covered her bosom was rather disordered, and, O heaven and hell! it was not only deranged, but crushed into a thousand ripples.

She trembled, and breathed with great difficulty. Her moist eye was all voluptuousness. Her mien and every motion of her body expressed desire. Not that innocence and modest resistance with which she used to check the bold caresses of her husband! Not that virginal coyness which granted nothing, but required every favour to be gained by force. Methought to see before me some wanton courtezan, so bold, so decoying were her gestures. Nothing could be more certain than that Don Bernardos had mixed something with her wine.

He seemed to have purposely prepared himself for this adventure. Instead of a plain and simple dress, which he always wore, he was now decked out in all the glittering tinsels of a Parisian beau. The grave and manly sounds of his voice were broken into low and surfeiting terms of endearment. Formerly I had taken him for a likely man in his proper

proper and natural character, but now he appeared so intolerably disguised and absurd, that in any other place I would have laughed at him.

His eyes were flaming, his breast fermented, he seemed to be at a loss to find words, or even destitute of the very faculty of thinking. His convulsively trembling hands supplied the place of language, which would indeed have been superfluous here. The execrable villain profaned the pure throne of love—and alas! Adela did not hinder it.

After having satiated himself with a thousand libidinous kisses from one of the finest bosoms in the world, he prepared himself to consummate the foul crime. Adela was fatigued, and made not the least resistance. A febrile shivering now seemed to make her faint in his arms.

C H A P. X.

SARCE could my tottering feet sustain the weight of my body. A sudden giddiness almost bent me to the ground. But the imminence of the danger restored me all the strength, which the dread of the former had wrested from me. Despair roused me from the swoon of furious rage. I laid hold of my loaded gun; I cocked it; one and the same slug was to exterminate both of the adulterers.

But some guardian angel watched over Adela's life. In the very moment I pulled the trigger, my thumb accidentally got between the cock and the pan. The clattering made Bernardos, who already held my wife claspt in his arms, draw sideways. Struck with fear, he stretched his neck. But not a moment would I grant him to recollect himself. The trigger is pulled a second time; the cock flies—and down he drops with his brains



brains blown out, on the victim of his infernal lust !

Adela laid beneath him in a deep swoon. In the first ebullition of my fury I was not satisfied with shooting one ; I went and shook Adela : " Accursed woman !" cried I with a thundering voice, " awake, awake to thy punishment !" She gave several signs of returning reason. I then pressed the bloody corpse of her guilty paramour closely into her arms, and went out to pacify those of the servants, whom the report of the piece might have drawn into the outer apartments.

I met some of them with candles in their hands. I told them, that my gun had only gone off by accident, and hurt my thumb a little. The women, especially the marchioness's confidential Abigail, wanted to force their way into the apartment of their mistress : but I sent them all back to their room, where I ordered them to be locked up. Having got my thumb dressed, I ordered the men down stairs with my valet, to whom I gave orders to take a gun and shoot the first fellow that



that should offer to stir contrary to my directions.

On my return to the marchioness, I found her quite recovered. She had risen from the sofa, rejected the gory remains of Bernados, and kneeling before a chair at some distance from him, awaited her own fate. She was quite sure of death, and wished for it. How could she ever have looked again into my face, without sinking to the ground overwhelmed with shame?

On my entering the room she startled. Every feature of her countenance was altered, and she was the picture of horror and despondence. Her hair stood frightfully an end, and some locks dyed with the blood of her gallant hung over her forehead. The lustre of her eyes was extinct, and blinked quite ghastly at her supposed executioner. Her lips contracted by grief, only opened to give vent to her agonizing moans.

Instead of being moved by this horrid spectacle, my indignation only became the more vehement. I laid down my piece, which I was still holding in my hand, went to the window, threw



threw it up, seized the corpse by the throat, and furiously flung it into the garden.

"Rise, madam," cried I. She tried to get up, but sunk several times exhausted on the floor. I then laid hold of her by the arms to raise her by force. She must surely have thought that I wanted to throw her after her villainous paramour. Collecting her breath, she whispered with a faint voice, "I thank you, Don Carlos, pray be quick and dispatch me."

I got her at last to stand on her feet, and thus continued, "Behind yon screen is your washing-bason with water. Bring it hither, and wash away this damned blood from the floor."

She reeled obediently to the spot, and not able to find a napkin, pulled out her pocket-handkerchief, first wiped her eyes with it, went down on her knees, and began to scrub off the odious gore. She was several times obliged to stop in this operation, to draw breath. A flood of tears gushed from her face, and mixed with the clotted blood. I stood by to light her. Between whiles I called

led out to her, "Rub harder, madam. Here is another stain."

Having done, she threw herself with her face on the floor, I raised her anew, and fetching a torch from the next apartment, put it into her hand, saying, "Now go before, madam, and light me." Meanwhile I took the basin with the blood, and we descended into the garden.

I conducted her below the window, out of which I had flung the dead body, took it myself on my shoulder, and having given the basin to the marchioness, bid her follow me to the most solitary part of the garden. She was dumb, trembled and shivered, and spilt a great deal of the blood. "Hold the basin steady, madam!" cried I, with austere severity. The poor wretch took pains to obey me, but it was in vain.

I found a spade, and having reached the lonely spot, began to dig a hole. The ground being soft, my work was soon done. She had sat down on the trunk of a tree, and lighted me with the torch. Now I snatched it from her, saying, "Come, madam, give your gallant



lant the parting kisf!" As patiently as the lamb that goes to be slaughtered, she knelt down before the body, and kissed its pale mouth. I contemplated with pleasure the reluctance expressed in her countenance. She rose again, and I buried the corpse. I poured the blood over the rising turf of the tomb, and dashed the basin in pieces. "Thus, I Bernardos," added I, "do I devote thee to damnation and everlasting infamy! thou hast robbed thy friend of all that was dear to him!"

Adela could weep no more. Perhaps she was too much occupied with the fate that awaited her. Only at certain intervals her dark eyes would dwell on me with secret horror. I studiously avoided those glances, and beckoned her to follow me to the villa.

We returned to her chamber, she fainted, and I put her on the sopha. When she recovered a little, I said, "Here Madam, is the key of the room in which I have thought proper to shut up your women. This instant, get ready your trunk, that we may set out in less than an hour. By the time you are ready,



you will tell me, whether you prefer the Penitent Sisters at Seville or some convent in France."

This she had not expected. So much generosity overwhelmed her. She threw herself from the sofa on the floor, and embraced my feet. The transition from the terrors of death to the certainty of life had been too sudden, and Adela could not rise again. I gently lifted her up, put her on the sofa, sprinkled her pallid face with water and rubbed her forehead. Perhaps my features expressed too much of emotion. She was aware of it and wanted to prostrate herself a second time before me ; but I held her fast. " For God's sake !" cried she, " kill me not with excessive kindness. I have deserved death. Here is my bosom. Put an end to my hellish torments !"

She bared her breast. I turned away with scornful disdain, that I might not see it. " Be tranquil, Madam," answered I with composure, " and thank Providence that I did not surprise you after the consummation of the atrocious

atrocious crime. My vengeance is now at an end. I have pardoned you."

At these words I presented my hand to her, which she covered with an hundred eager kisses. "Thanks to your generous forbearance," replied she, "towards a more misguided than criminal woman! Heaven will reward your virtue! for, alas! myself can do it no longer!"

She sobbed violently, and I began to dread for her life. In her first fit of despair, she wanted presence of mind for any resolution, but now the most poignant remorse made her be resigned to every thing. I trembled to see her absorbed in thought. The whole extent of her guilt, her forfeited happiness, her indelible disgrace, her future misery in being for ever banished from my sight and buried in the dreary shades of cloistered seclusion, thronged with bitterness into her mind. How fain would she have met instant destruction! I trembled at every convulsive motion of her body, lest she should make an attempt to put a period to her existence.

I sat

I sat down by her side and held both her hands, "Adela," said I, "my poor wife! Abuse not the weakness of thy husband. He has forgiven thee. Give him not reason to repent it. He would deem this despair a mere artifice to blind him once more—employ the future part of thy life to convince him, that if thou hast been misled, it was only for a moment."

She pressed my hands to her bosom, and then leaned her face on them. Her distressed eyes spoke enthusiastic gratitude. She durst go no farther. It was the angel of Repentance, cheered by the distant glimpse of hope revived.

"Now I call your women, Adela," pursued I, "prepare yourself for a journey. We have no time to lose. I am surrounded with base listeners, the next town we come to discharge Isabella, I ask it as a favor."

This Isabella was her confidential servant, and the marchioness understood me. "I am tall obedience my most injured husband," answered she kissing my hand. I rose, unlocked the door of the room in which the women were confined, let them out, and desired them to walk up to their mistress. The men had behaved

behaved well, and my valet kept a strict eye upon them.

The horses being put before my travelling-chaise, I asked Adela what place she would choose for her future residence? She replied, that she could not think of ever coming before her father's presence, as the overwhelming consciousness of her guilt would render death a thousand times more welcome, than the sight of an austere father. She had no objection to retire to the convent of the Penitent Sisters at Seville, or any other religious house in Spain, to which I might condescend to send her. The abbess of the cloister at Seville being a friend of my late mother's, I told her, that she would be best treated there. She readily consented, and we set out. On the road, I agreed with her, on what we should say to the abbess respecting her separation, and how I would satisfy the enquiries of her own family.

Have I really power enough to describe our parting? Scarce can I imagine how nature could endure it. During the whole journey, Adela never opened her lips, and the

deepest, dumbest and even most moanless melancholy had changed her into a mere shadow, but this shadow, still bearing the traces of the sweetest reality, moved every beholder to tears. All our attendants, all those with whom we only stopped for an hour on the road, began to participate in my sentiments. I myself, with all my reasons of hatred and abhorrence, could not help feeling the impression of the secret influence, which a beautiful woman, repentant and distressed, is apt to exert. I endeavoured to console her, but my kind attention only made her the sadder. She thanked me with still tears, and the discreet fervor of a humbled and half-broken heart, shewing me at the same time, that she despaired of every thing.

As soon as the cloister came in sight, she began to break out in loud lamentations upon her cruel fate. She seemed quite inconsolable, but I was sure, that the bosom of solitude would minister more comfort unto her wounded heart, than she really expected.

C H A P. XI.

HAVING recommended Adela in the best manner to the abbess, who had shewn her the apartment which she was to inhabit, I went to bid her adieu. Entering the place where she was, she ran to meet me, and rushed into my arms. I had not the heart to reject with contempt the caresses of a woman, whom I had once so ardently loved. This moment was too solemn; I pressed my cheek to her clay-cold face, kissed her eyes and forehead, and said, "compose yourself, my poor wife. Strive to make peace with your own heart, and remember, that though the harmony of innocent love will never be restored between us,—yet I am your only friend, and whatever my heart has once cherished, it can never forget."

—"No, Carlos," returned she, with a faltering voice, "take back your friendship, I want it not. What should I, that could once have quaffed the whole cup of love and hap-

pines, now do with a single drop? Do you think my glowing heart can cool itself with wretched illusions?—No, man of my soul, Adela has wantonly abridged the career of her blissful felicity. Death is now the only thing that remains for her. Yes—I'll die nobly. I have lost your heart, but will not forfeit your esteem.—Grant me the farewell-embrace!—Alas! Carlos, never shall I see thee again!"

I knew not what reply to make. I did not wish to give her too much hope, and yet my heart was bleeding. My senses were confused at being so near to her bosom, whose throbbing I was too well acquainted with. Her dying charms, the deadly paleness of her cheeks, her sad lingering eyes most sensibly touched the very strings of my heart.

—"Despair of nothing Adela," quoth I, "perhaps the future still keeps in store for us a thousand events. Who knows, where it may bring us together again? Time effaces most impressions, the bad in them vanishes, and nothing but the good stays behind."

—"No, no, I will not have these hopes.

And

And were you even ready to take me to your bosom, with the same tenderness, the same confidence,—I would not return to it.—But my Carlos,” continued she after a pause, “ I carry here on my breast your portrait, which my poor brother gave me, and which rendered so easy our first acquaintance. Will you suffer me to keep it?”

Here she pulled it out with a trembling hand, anxiously waiting for my answer, and finding me hesitate for a moment, the overwhelming weight of her feelings made her drop insensibly on the floor. I could not hold out any longer. I raised her with some difficulty, placed her in an arm chair, rung the bell, and somebody coming in, I precipitately quitted the convent.

I now went to Madrid to make application to the Grand Inquisitor for obtaining his absolution from the crime of murder, for which the secular magistrates would no doubt have prosecuted me. I was certainly wrong in concealing the body of the perfidious Bernar-dos, but the despotism of my rage would allow me no time for reflection. Had the po-

lice laid hold of me before I took this step, I would have found it difficult to get out of the clutches of criminal justice. But the caution with which I tempered the whole proceeding, the confining of all the servants, and the deposition of myself, my valet, and another servant, added to a large fee which I paid the Grand Inquisitor, and the promise of a donation to a convent, soon procured me all possible safety. The cunning priest to cure me of all scruples, even asserted, I had done very right to inter the body in my park, as the offence Bernardos had committed was subject to the cognizance of his spiritual jurisdiction, and as by the canonical laws he was the same as if he had been *ipso facto* excommunicated, he could by no means be entitled to a christian burial. The *reverend* judge made no great enquiries into the nature of the case, and seemed to accept my gold as the heaviest proof I could alledge in my behalf. Thus will priestcraft frequently combine with power and wealth, to turn wrong into right, and crime into virtue. I do not mean to say, that I actually became criminal in slaying a mon-

ster

ster who bereft me of all I held dear ; but were any *rich* murderer to make a similar application with a heavy purse of gold, no enquiries would probably be made into the reality of the case, his word would pass for the truth, and himself get off triumphant ; whereas the *poor man* would, justly or unjustly, suffer for the crime imputed to him. The Inquisition immediately directed a mandate to the magistrates of Alcantara, declaring me free from all responsibility respecting Bernardo's death, and forbidding them to call me to an account.

From Madrid I returned to Alcantara to appoint a proper person to take care of my estates, as I intended to set out travelling to Portugal or Italy. On my arrival at Alcantara two letters from Adela's father were delivered to me. He informed me in one of them that Count Selami and Caroline had left France and were gone to Toledo. I answered his letters, and stated to him the reasons of Adela's retreat to the convent at Seville, in the same délicate and plausible manner as I had promised her. The goodnatured baron,

who was uncommonly fond of me, believed all my assertions, promised to visit his daughter at Seville, and to keep up a diligent correspondence with her. He however bitterly complained, that she should have preferred a cloister to the paternal mansion. This deeply moved me; the reasons which I assigned for her retreat were, an inward debility, and an indisposition which nothing but loneliness could possibly cure.

Having finally settled the management of my affairs, I prepared to visit my friend Selami, who had by this time sent me an invitation to his seat near Toledo. My father-in-law had informed me, that the count left France very suddenly, because his proud spirit could not bear the mortification, which the revolution forced every privileged order to endure.

I was determined to surprise the count, by not letting him know of my coming. When I reached the terrace of his garden, the first object which struck my eyes was a tender child sitting on the green turf, playing with a large greyhound. The animal being one of those

those I had myself reared and presented to the count, began to recognize me and jumped and barked for joy.

The count, rather alarmed by the barking, hastened to the spot, and perceiving me, flew quite transported into my arms. The azure sky smiled with sympathetic serenity over us, and flowers sprung up under our feet. My friend now took me by the hand, and conducted me to the house. " You know all objects but too well, Carlos, but there is one that is new in the family."

Here he took up the infant, who could be about two years old, and said, " this is my son, marquis. What will you say to it, if I have called him Carlos?"

—“ Heaven grant, that he be more fortunate than his namesake.”

—“ What, Carlos? You still complain of fate?—Indeed I think you look paler than you used to do. But never mind. I'll do all I can to cheer you.”

We had now advanced arm in arm to the balcony of the mansion, from which I descried a lady, eying me with great curiosity

and attention. Her dress indicated a person of quality, but of her face I had not the least knowledge. It appeared very deformed and ugly to my sight, and after a short pause, I eagerly asked the count, "pray have you got company to day?"

— "Not a soul."

— "But who is this strange lady on the balcony?"

— "I was sure you would not know her. It is my wife, the mother of this child."

— "Good God! So Caroline is dead?"

— "No, my friend," quoth he, with a smile mixed with bitterness, "I will not unpleasantly surprize you. It is the same Caroline, whom you once so passionately loved. The small-pox has quite disfigured her."

I clapped my hands with amazement. Thus had nature amply avenged itself for the jilting cruelty, with which she had formerly treated my luckless attachment.

— "Never mind, Carlos," resumed my friend, "though her beauty be gone, yet she will please you the more, by what she has gained in loveliness."

The



The aversion which I felt, of making new female acquaintances, inspired me with a kind of natural dislike to her person. She had once been the idol of my soul, and my pride was now flattered with the idea of my having not only nothing more to dread from her charms, but even of seeing it was in my power to humble her with the loss of them, if she should urge me to recur to such an extremity.

With these sensations I entered her drawing-room. She rose from her sopha, and stept forwards to receive us with a blush, a downcast eye, and a modest curtsey.

The count to draw her out of her perplexity, took me by the hand, "madam," quoth he, "our good friend is come hither to taste the sweets of friendship, being perhaps weary of love." This put Caroline into countenance, and she answered, "Don Carlos is welcome, but it would be a pity, if he had renounced the suavities of the noblest of passions."

The conversation soon grew warm and sentimental, and in less than ten minutes my

former familiarity with Caroline was restored. I now found, that her face was not half so much deformed as it appeared to me at first sight, its marks certainly formed a very disagreeable contrast with the remaining traces of its pristine smoothness, but the natural delicacy of her features might be said to have resisted every attack of the evil. Her mouth was still fresh and rosy, her eyes sparkled more sentiment, and a sickly pallor spread a delightful languor over her face.

There was an irresistible spell in her conversation. Her voice in Siren-accents expressed the sensibility of her heart, which was tinctured with an air of soft melancholy. Those that loved her once, could now have adored her. Her maternal fondness of the pledge of her consort's love was quite exemplary, and served to give the finishing touch to her various accomplishments.

The count assigned the same apartments to me, which I had occupied before, and heard my late misfortunes with all that sympathetic concern, which characterizes a heart wholly

wholly fraught for friendship. His opinion was, that all my miseries were due to the implacable Cabal, whose destruction he devoutly wished for. He did all he could to dispel the gloominess which had taken possession of my mind, and devoted the first hours of the morning and the latest of the night to the alleviation of my distresses. Caroline was still more eager than himself to rouse my broken spirit. But she seemed to catch the contagion, and I soon concluded, that some molesting secret preyed on her heart. Her husband fortunately did not remark it, but I soon perceived, that she became more cool and negligent in her caresses to my friend, and even began to bestow less care on the tender offspring of their union.

Though our habitual confidence in each other, might have justified on my part the attempt of searching into Caroline's secret, yet my scruples would not permit it. I therefore left all to time. As to my friend, I thought it my duty to talk to him on the subject. He deemed it impossible, that her sadness could be owing to any moral cause. He attributed

attributed it to some physical defect in her system, and expressed his desire of having the advice of her physician on the subject. He added, that ever since her lying-in she had betrayed various symptoms of that latent distemper which he declared to consist in an inward agitation, and that he thought travelling would prove the most efficacious remedy to cure her of it. "So next year," concluded he, "we shall make the tour of Italy, and I hope you will be one of the party."

I gladly assented to my friend's proposal, though I did not think it a proper remedy to eradicate his wife's disease. My heart made me, I don't know why, despair of its efficacy. Whenever I was alone with Caroline she would fix her longing looks on me, and what I thought most strange, was, her having never enquired after Adela, nor asked the cause of our separation. The count, I was sure, had kept his promise to me, in not opening his lips upon the latter subject.

Autumn came. Our neighborhood grew livelier by the inhabitants of the city retiring to

to the country to enjoy the sports and delights of the vintage. A great number of visitors waited on the count or spent whole days at his mansion. Both he and I disliked too much gaiety, and the countess, notwithstanding her being constantly in the midst of it, appeared now more and more depressed by her secret chagrin.

Chance, as adverse as favorable to lovers, unravelled, in fine, on some unhappy day her profoundest secrets. We had a great deal of company, and rather embarrassed in what manner to entertain them, the count proposed a walk after dinner to a mill, romantically situate in our vicinage. The ladies also wishing to accompany the gentlemen, followed them all on foot. The count and I, arm in arm, led the way.

The path grew narrower and narrower the more we approached the mill. To increase the nuisance, a miller's boy, leading a horse, made his appearance, and regardless of the sight of so many noble and respectable characters, and of the outcries of his master, brushed through the middle of us with the animal.

head is so weak, and why thus wish to break your neck?"

I made a bow, and silently retired. The count was quite petrified, and all the company seemed disturbed. I could not speak a word, and my friend was the first who broke the ice. "Caroline," said he, "it is late, see the ladies back to the castle."

She cheerfully complied, and we went before them. The count was silent and very much grieved. I could plainly read in his generous heart, that it harbored no bitterness, no suspicion against me.

The whole company of visitors left us shortly afterwards. At supper my friend was as sprightly as usual, and very attentive to his spouse. He anticipated every wish from her eyes, and gratified it before it could fully display itself in her soul. He dressed himself better, was constantly about her, and sought by celestial kindness to brighten her heavy hours. He ingeniously would mix little Carlos, the sweet pledge of their loves, in every thing he said or did. In fine, he left nothing untried that a feeling heart could do to reclaim that which had wandered astray.

On

On my own part, I shunned every opportunity, which could have interrupted his tender endeavors, and avoided being alone with Caroline. Hardly could I be prevailed upon to sit at table with them, and then used to be quite neutral and deaf to all their family-concerns. The rest of my time was spent in visiting our neighbors, making fresh acquaintances, giving fêtes and balls,—in short, I was now generally to be met with any where but at the castle.

C H A P. XII.

CAROLINE was grieved at this change. The constant presence of her husband, and his tender marks of regard, became truly detestable to her. If I pleased her before, my almost continual absence now rendered me the most adorable of all mortals in her eyes. Distance served to render my character more amiable, jealousy added still more to its attractives, and Caroline's blood was wholly infected with the corroding poison of illicit love. Absorbed in a deep and speechless melancholy she became a real problem.

blem to all her acquaintance. The count dreaded an explosion, and avoided seeing company, but this restraint totally disconcerted Caroline.

Meanwhile I ordered my servants to pack up my things, and resolved upon a speedy departure from my friend's seat, as soon as I should have found a sufficient apology to do it with good grace. I was certain that his heart really wished my absence, and that nothing but the most tender regard for his wife's honor prevented him from plainly telling me his mind without any preambles.

Once I returned late after midnight from one of my nocturnal revels, and knowing that the countess used to retire to rest much sooner, I hoped to find an opportunity to speak to her spouse respecting the project I meditated. However, at my approach, I was very much surprised to see a light in her apartment.

I entered the mansion, and reaching the top of the first flight of stairs, was struck at finding the countess there, exclaiming in tears, "Ah! Carlos!" These words re-echoed obscurely

obscurely in my soul. What could they mean? At the same moment she fell fainting into my arms.

—“What ails you, madam?” asked I, “are you not well?”

—“I am very ill, Carlos,” replied she, raising her face from my shoulder. Never had I seen a countenance so full of agitation, and her dishevelled locks hung bewildered over her face. “Pity me, Carlos,” added she, “for heaven’s sake! pity me!”

—“She is out of her mind,” said I to myself, “or presently will be. What must I do? I cannot flatter her passion even for a moment; and suppose I really were to do it purely to pacify her for to-night, these walls have ears, and the count’s friendship is dearer to me than my life.”

—“O! Carlos,” cried she, “is thy heart as insensible as a rock?”

—“Upon my word, madam,” replied I whispering, “what can be the matter with you? Consider the place, and the count still up—”

—“Then come to my chamber!”

“I think

—“ I think the count has seen, and waits for me.”

—“ O ! come with me !” pursued she, weeping and kneeling down at my feet.

—“ Dear, dear,” continued I highly alarmed, “ what can ail you my lady ? You seem to have lost your senses. Shall I call somebody ? ”

She shook her head.

—“ You no doubt want to speak to me ? But remember the unseasonable hour ! the improper place ! If you have something very particular to tell me, I promise to meet you to-morrow after midnight in the garden.”

—“ O Carlos ! ” exclaimed she with impassionate rapture, “ will you meet me indeed ? Will you ? Ah, I well knew there still remained a glimmering spark of your former fondness ! ” At these words she hastily flew to my bosom, and covered my face with ardent kisses. I startled, as if I heard some noise, got softly loose from her embraces, and conducting her to her drawing-room, silently retired. “ To-morrow, after midnight, Carlos !

los! To-morrow after midnight!" cried she, with a loud voice.

I was quite embarrassed how to act. Not that my heart had spoke in the least manner in favor of Caroline, for to me she was, as it were, a woman without sex. To acquaint the count with the whole extent of his misfortune, finally struck me as a measure as necessary as it was cruel. I knew of no other means of keeping the assignation without treachery.

While I feigned to retire to my apartment, I tript on my toes back to my friend. I found him reading, and his countenance rather gloomy.

—“ You are very downcast, Selami?” cried I with confidential assurance. “ Has anything happened? How is the countess?”

—“ I don’t think she is a-bed yet,” returned he, “ she was more agitated this night than I ever saw her before. She has been crying ever since morning; she complains of every thing. The weather, she says, is too cold; she murmurs at your never favoring her with your company, accuses the neighbors

bors with cruelty for not visiting her, grumbles at the child's being unruly and troublesome—in short, God knows what ails her. What," added he frankly, "is to be done with such a strange being of a wife?"

—“Send her to a nunnery, and let it be the same where Adela is!”

Here my friend surveyed me with a wild stare. The hint was dropped, and had penetrated all his sensibility. “Alas!” exclaimed he, “what a shocking fate awaits me now?”

—“Our destinies, dear friend, are alike. The same incidents and the same sorrows ought then to rivet the closer the ties of our attachment.”

—“But have I deserved it, marquis? Have I ever neglected any one duty? But all is in vain! My very tenderness has turned Caroline's heart. But be this as it may, such a woman shall never part me from my friend.”

—“Your candor, Selami, warrants me, that you know my heart. You may rely on your Carlos.”

—“But what will you do?”

I now

I now related to him without reserve, what had happened at the top of the stairs. Instead of being shocked at the account, he was quite enraptured with the honor and sincerity of his friend.

— “O my second self!” exclaimed he with enthusiasm, “art thou really a man? art thou really my friend? or is my happiness a mere illusion?”

— “My love is reality. Your Carlos detests ingratitude. Oft have you found me weak and irresolute, but treacherous—never!”

We now agreed to try one more gentle remedy with the countess. His heart was quite averse to using harsh means, though an expedient of such a kind, firmly practised at first, might probably have been productive of the best consequences. The assignation fixed for the next night, afforded me the best opportunity of making a declaration to Caroline, and the count left it to my eloquence to bestow it as strong and forcible as I possibly could. I insisted on his being a secret witness of our discourse, to which he made

many objections, but informing him that I absolutely would do nothing in the matter without his granting the above condition, he ultimately yielded to my intreaties.

Heaven alone knows in what manner I spent the remainder of the night and the following day. I solely occupied myself with studying how to address Caroline. The count, with matchless presence of mind, appeared as attentive as ever to his spouse, whose mind was wholly occupied with me. Meanwhile the roseate hue of her expanded hopes suffused her cheeks, and she seemed to be rocked by some sweet dream. At night she ate no supper, her frame trembled with solicitous expectation, her looks became indiscreet, and she lost all the powers of self-command.

Though we continued several hours at table, yet the Countess, notwithstanding her impatience, would not be the first to rise. It certainly was the main business not to raise suspicion at the very last moment. My friend, after all, complained of a violent head-ach, wished Caroline a good night, who thanked him

him more eagerly than ever, and shook hands with me. Having withdrawn, I remained a little while longer; and intimating to her, that the count was not to be trusted, and that we ought to be cautious we spoke on indifferent matters, but I could not prevent her from rising and embracing me. I then disengaged myself, and beckoned her to follow.

The count, according to agreement, had already taken post in the garden, and it might be one o'clock in the morning. It was as clear and serene a night as can possibly be expected in the month of October. I told the countess to enter the garden through the principal gate, while I should find my way into it through a little private door, to which I got access by taking a circuitous tour through the different yards and out-buildings of the castle. She obeyed. I had hardly reached the place of rendezvous, before a soft hand suddenly seized mine; it was that of Caroline, who notwithstanding all the haste I made, had got the start, and sallying forth from a thicket, surprised, and loaded me

with caresses. "Thus," said she, "I catch thee Carlos!—But thou shrinkest from thy Caroline?"

She left me no time to return an answer. Nothing but the certainty of the count's being in ambush could keep me from yielding to human frailty, and from returning some of the lavished kisses of this enchantress. I seized her hand, and got away from her embraces. She seemed struck at my indifference. I led her trembling to a green seat, over which several tall bushes formed an arbor, behind which the count was hidden. She took this for a sure token of my remaining affection, and flattered herself with the sweet hope of this seat's becoming the couch on which I would gratify her wishes. In this belief she sank almost senseless on my bosom.

Had I been able to recal a single spark of my former passion for Caroline, and been alone and unobserved, I would have found it difficult to withstand her melting kisses and touching prayers. I had purposely laid it down as a condition, that the count himself

should

should be present, because I was doubtful how far I might trust my own sensations.

She perceived that I used every effort to break loose from her, but taking it for a piece of virile coquetry, she only clung to me the faster. "Why seek to wind thyself from my arms?" asked she smiling; "no, no, Carlos, thou shan't escape me as thou didst yesterday."

"But I must, Caroline. Only recover yourself, and acknowledge in me not only your true friend, but also the confidant of your husband's bosom."

"O wretched man!" resumed she, startling back as from a monster, "is this the reception your treacherous similes had promised me?"

"It certainly is; I only expected to learn from you a secret, in which I might have served you with my advice. Did not you choose me your friend, and is there aught you wish for better than real friendship?"

She threw herself on the ground, and held me fast by the knees. "No, no, Carlos,

pursued she, “ ‘tis neither confidence nor friendship, but love I demand. Here I deposit it at your feet, and if your cruelty reject it—my bosom shall bear these pangs till the grave will ease me of my burden.”

Here she reposèd her head on my knee, and a long pause ensued. I could not help shedding tears, and am assured my friend did as much for his unhappy wife.

I endeavoured to raise the countess, “ Rise, madam,” quoth I, “ you ask too much from me. Can Caroline give way to so unworthy a passion?”

—“ No, Carlos,” replied she, “ I know I ask what is reasonable. Years have I known thee and thy susceptible heart. It has always been open to the tenderest love, and for me alone thou wilt now be cruel!”

—“ No, Caroline; the wife of my bosom-friend, is, after him, the next to my heart. I once loved you with too much juvenile fondness, and renounced my passion, to resign all its claims into the hands of the noblest and most deserving of men.”

I started

I started these remonstrances in hopes of embittering her against me. But she quite misconstrued my meaning, and thought to find in it some remains of love and jealousy. "How can Carlos thus upbraid me?" continued she, "Have I not sufficiently expiated my error? Have I not pined away in the fairest blossom of life, parted and absent from thee? and now returned repentant to thy feet, to offer thee the possession of my whole being, while every pulse beats for thee, while every thought of my mind bears thy image—O Carlos!—can't thou reject me?"

She fell to the ground in an agony of painful convulsions, and wrung her hands in despair. I lifted her to replace her on the seat, when she melted in tears. No man ever found himself in such a situation. I was watched, yet so very much alone, that I could expect no help but from my own powers.

--"Dearest countess," answered I, "you never was more mistaken than at this moment. I am unworthy of your love, and never mer-

rited it. Else how could I have forgot you so soon?"

—"So soon? Eternal God! is there no hopes for me, Marquis? speak—speak out, I conjure you! Why have you brought me hither in this damp and foggy night?"

She now began to rave, and all her words indicated a strong derangement of her mental faculties. She wildly beat about with her hands. Her whole frame was in convulsion. Her sparkling eyes became extinct, and she fell down as pale as a corpse. The faint glimpses of the planet of night shed new horrors over this trying scene. She only uttered some deep moans, and I had hardly strength enough to prevent her from taking away her life.

The count approached. We tried every means to restore her to her senses, when after a long paroxysm of dilirium, she seemed to recognize him, her hair stood an end, she violently wrested herself from us, and was on the point of throwing herself into an adjacent canal, but I fortunately prevented her from accomplishing the sinister purpose. Shame, rage,

rage, despair, and deluded and insulted love deprived her of reason, and the grief which secretly preyed on her bosom, now broke forth with such violence, as to cramp every vein of her body, and to throw her into a trance, from which it was dubious whether we should ever be able to rouze her again.

After trying various remedies in vain, she finally awoke from her lethargy, and staring wildly around, began to speak. But every word she said was incoherent, and declared the entire derangement of the faculties of her mind.

She took me for her husband, and her husband for me, but could bear neither of us to be about her.

Her recovery was very slow, and her short lucid intervals were succeeded by dreadful relapses. We seldom appeared in her apartment, and she fortunately seemed to have lost all remembrance of us. Her infant son was the only being she spoke to, and she always kept him playing by her bed-side. There was not one among her neighbors and acquaintances she knew again, and a sombre melancholy had blighted all her wishes and desires.

The count was utterly at a loss what to do with her. His inventive powers were exhausted, and he consulted me respecting the travelling to Italy formerly proposed, as the last expedient he could try. I advised him to propose it himself to the Countess, but he might as well have addressed himself to a dumb animal. She gazed at him with a bewildered look, like one who hears words without comprehending them, and then cast her eyes down again.

Meanwhile I was considering of the propriety of sending her to the Penitent Sisters at Seville, where the company of my Adela and their former friendship, might probably be more efficacious in curing her, than all her husband's care and delicate forbearance. But uncertain of the real state of Adela's heart, which her tender letters could not clear up entirely to my satisfaction, I felt at first some scruples to expose the countess under the pretence of effecting her recovery to far greater dangers. If Adela's heart was not radically mended, and a companion had been sent her,

with

with a passion in her breast more ardent than her own, what must have been the result of the company of two women, who in the heat of their temper, and the excess of their ungratified feelings, might have been capable of every mischief? I also considered, that Adela's returning affection towards me, would perhaps rouse Caroline's jealousy. From these reflections I thought it best to prevail on my friend to let me go to Seville, where I intended personally to sound Adela's state of mind, and then decide with him the project of sending or not sending his Caroline to the same place.

He approved of my resolution, and I set out accordingly. Arrived at Seville, I went to an inn, not far from the convent of the Penitent Sisters, where I painted my face, eye-brows and mouth, put a large plaster on my right eye, dressed myself in the disguise of a servant, wearing the livery of the domefticks of the governor of Alcantara, and took a letter written and sealed by me to Adela, to acquaint her with a speedy visit from Countess Caroline Selami.

H 6

I arrived

I arrived at the gate of the cloister, just as the nuns were at prayers. I rung the bell, and the porter coming up to me, I asked her, casting a sheepish look on the direction of the letter, if there was not a certain Marchioness de Grandez there, I had got a letter for her?

—“ Poor lady !” began the talkative sister, “ I am glad there is some joyful news for her. The letter, I suppose, comes from her husband ! Poor thing ! she almost devours his letters before she has read them !”

—“ But pray, what kind of a woman is that Marchioness ?”

—“ A very great lady, I assure you master ; so sweet, so mild, so virtuous — ”

—“ Only think !” interrupted I with an air of simplicity.

—“ When her ladyship first came, she did nothing but weep. She was quite pining away, and the other ladies could hardly get a word out of her mouth. What ails you madam ? What’s the matter ? every one would ask her, and there is not one that had not wished to know the secret.”

—“ I dare

—“ I dare say,” replied I, “ and would not care if I knew it myself.”

—“ There is no telling what it really was, but there are many suspicions?”

—“ Oddso !”

—“ They say, her spouse is of a wild, fiery temper, and, who knows, what other scenes may have happened in the family !”

Good God ! thought I, somebody must have betrayed them.—“ Perhaps the Marquis was jealous,” answered I, “ and if the lady be handsome, I don’t see why he shou’dn’t?”

—“ That’s impossible, master. She is the pattern of virtue. Several persons came to visit her here, but she never would see strangers nor speak to them. I rather think it is the Marquis’s fault.”

Here I breathed more freely. So the honor of my wife was screened, I little cared what the world thought of mine.

—“ Very true, sister,” cried I, “ the marquis is a sad fellow, he has played a thousand strange tricks, and God knows ! when he means to leave them off.”

—“ So you know him ?”

“ And

" And who does not from hear-say ? I'm sure he must be one of the wildest jockies alive. But church is over now, and I have orders to deliver this letter personally to the marchioness. Will you have the goodness to tell her, that a servant of the Governor of Alcantara, that came hither with his master, is charged with a letter from Don Carlos ? "

— " But I am afraid she won't see you."

— " Then only tell her the letter comes from her husband, and that my orders are to deliver it into no other hands but her own."

I was confident that however shy she might be of receiving strangers, she could not refuse admittance to a person sent by her husband. The sister went and returned a little while after, with the intelligence of her having orders to introduce me into the parlor.

I followed the sister, and found Adela ready to receive me at the barred window. Without deigning to honor me with a single look she eagerly snatched the letter from my hands, inspected the direction and seal, kissed it, broke it open, and began to peruse the contents. But with such eager haste did she

seem

seem to read, as to be often obliged to peruse certain passages over again, in order not to lose the sense.

Meanwhile I had leisure enough to examine the features of my wife's countenance. They became brighter and serener, the more she went on reading. Tenderness, love, and candor beamed in her eyes, and at the conclusion of the letter a big tear trickled down her face. She would not even turn away to hide it from me, but let it drop on the letter, which she once more fervently kissed.

—“ Do you come straight from Alcántara, my good friend ? ” asked she putting the letter in her bosom.

—“ Yes, Madam, I came with letters from the Governor, my master, for the archbishop of this place.”

—“ Do you know the Marquis de Grandez ? ”

—“ Who should not know such a benevolent man ? He always wishes to see every body happy.”

These words affected her. “ You are right,”
returned

returned she sighing, " but he does often lavish his kindness on the ungrateful "

—“ The world abounds with them, madam.”

Here her eyes swelled with tears, but the inward consciousness of her guilt made her hide them and she turned aside to wipe them off.

—“ Do you see him often ?”

—“ Very often.”

—“ Then you are more fortunate than I !”

—“ Why Madam ? you will see him once, and then continue with him for good.”

—“ God bless you for this good prophecy. Should I ever leave this convent, I'll remember it to your advantage. But now take this small present for your message.”

Here she handed me a double pistole in gold, through the bars of the window. I eagerly seized her hand and kissed it, and while I was stooping and holding it fast, I pulled a small diamond ring which she well knew, off my finger, and put it on that on which she wore her wedding-ring. I then quickly turned round to be gone. She did not

not perceive the ring till I had got to the door, when she cried out, "Heavens, what is that? Should it —— O stop, stop a little?" But I impetuously shut the door and made off.

My heart was quite pleased with the discovery I had made of my Adela's entire amendment, and already congratulated myself on my future happiness. I was sure now, that her company would soon restore Caroline to her reason, and on my return to Toledo, I acquainted my friend with the success of my excursion, and he now joyfully consented to send his spouse to live with mine. A fortnight after, Coroline being much better than she had been lately, my friend communicated our plan to her, and she expressed a lively desire to be with my Adela in the manner proposed. The count accompanied her to the convent, where he found Adela to whom he delivered a very promising and tender letter from me.

On his return, we agreed to set out together on our long-projected tour through Italy. We were just in time for the carnival at Venice.

nice. We wrote therefore to our spouses, to acquaint them with our intended departure, and promised to return within a twelvemonth at farthest.

C H A P. XIII.

ON our arrival at Venice, we found an astonishing concourse of strangers. Never was there a carnival more brilliant. The square at St. Mark was crowded all day long with thousands of curious masks. Plays, balls, pleasure-excursions gave a fair display to the spirit of intrigue and gallantry.

He that does not thrive successfully among the Venetian ladies, may renounce love and love-matters for life. The count and I were every where known, and having no reason to keep incognito, we resolved to spare no expences to do honor to our rank. We were of course looked upon as good and substantial conquests. The count, owing to his consummate personal accomplishments won many a heart, and I must confess, that the figure which



which myself cut was much inferior to his own.

Without the least envy I let him follow his brilliant fortunes. Only on some occasions, when I thought Caroline's rights too much invaded, I strove to keep him within bounds. He loved me so well as to have subjected himself entirely to my control, had I wished for it. Nevertheless his extreme susceptibility, made him commit many excesses, from which I would have found it very difficult to restrain him. Indeed I often wished him a genius, that might have accompanied him to those secret haunts, whither my looks were unable to penetrate.

The Dutchesse de F** ultimately captivated his taste. She combined all those qualifications, which the count loved to find in a woman. He frankly owned his passion to me. I was rather glad to hear, that one serious attachment should restrain him from committing other excesses. The count saw nothing else in that lady than a woman of sensibility, who was prepared to bless him with her friendship. I confirmed him in his opinion of the purity and



and disinterestedness of her love ; because such a thought could only keep him from making an attempt upon her virtue which was probably too weak, not to yield to his influence. But the dutchess herself soon destroyed those honorable ideas in his mind. She scorned immoderate reserve, and true to the character of an Italian woman, that had hitherto been always accustomed to captivate her own countrymen by sensual pleasure, she even could make no exception in her principles with regard to a foreigner.

She was very unhappily married to an old and jealous husband, who kept her much shut up, and at the time she got acquainted with the count, she probably had not yet committed any infidelity to the bed of the former. So closely had she always been watched as to have it put out of her power to give so much encouragement to any man as she afterwards did to the count, nor was there one before that hit upon the secret of familiarizing himself with the old duke, and bringing him over to his interest.

Such

Such was my friend's success. He first began to make the old man his friend, and at last became his most intimate confidant. The duke thought it his duty to introduce him to his spouse, however averse he had previously represented her to great company, and however fond of solitude. At last not a day passed without his pressing Selami to stay dinner or supper with him. The rest of the night was spent in revels in places of public resort, in the streets, in houses of ill-fame, and under various disguises, so that the duke and he were often in danger of losing their life, getting a sound drubbing, or being prosecuted.

Although I was certain of the count's suffering himself to be thus led about with inward reluctance, and his participating in those dissipations only as far as they kept the duke from his lady, and brought himself the nearer to her, yet methought he went too far.

As to the duchess she felt herself secretly obliged to my friend for this dissolute course of life. It afforded an opportunity to both, to make sure not only of every present happy moment,

moment, but likewise to enjoy those promised by futurity. Their mutual attachment to each other, which took place even before the count had been introduced to her, furnished them a thousand little artifices to express, unperceived, their sensations even before the eyes of the world, to give assignations, and to make any arrangement they pleased.

Count Selami finally brought it so far, as to obtain for myself the free access to the duke's house. I shewed so much indifference for the continuance of this connexion, that the duke would not even take the trouble of being jealous of me. At last his grace fancied, that some secret grief made me so dull and reserved, and in order to cure me of my supposed distemper, he soon thought proper to admit me to share his riotous pleasures, which I feigned to do so warmly, as to gain at last his confidence and friendship, almost in the same degree as the count. Thus I had not only the gratification of witnessing the fine manœuvres of a clandestine love-affair, but of rendering important services to the lovers themselves.

They



They were however not a bit the nearer the accomplishment of their wishes ; and though the dutches was then far less watched, yet her husband's friendship would but seldom permit him to lose sight of the count. This long privation wound up the desires of the fair Italian to the highest pitch, and she resolved to hazard every thing for the sake of gratification.

The count was apprised of this resolution, to which were added the bitterest complaints against his want of spirited enterprise. She threatened him with a nightly visit, as soon as she should be able to escape but half-way from the duke, and my friend, who perceived all the danger of loving more from caprice than inclination, trembled at the approach of each coming night, and was constantly consulting with me about the means of preventing any disagreeable surprise.

At last the night, so long wished for by the dutches, came. Her husband had returned very much intoxicated from a nocturnal banquet. He was taken so ill owing to his having surfeited himself, as to render it necessary

to

to send for a medical man, who ordered an immediate bleeding. But the patient only grew worse, fell into a violent fever, and began to grow delirious. The next step was, to remove him from the dutchess's apartment to another. The latter immediately put on her *zendale* *, gave the necessary orders to her waiting-woman, and hastened through a private door of the ducal palace to a gondola, which, by her commands, had been kept in readiness for several nights on the canal.

Count Selami had likewise taken every precaution to receive her in the house we inhabited. At the least knock given, the door was to be opened. The count never went to bed before day-break, and when he was obliged to go out, I was always waiting for her. The dutchess having intimated to him, that her visit was very nigh, he withdrew from company much sooner than usual, and we spent the remainder of the night in friendly conversation. His expectation was very fan-

* A dress peculiar to the Italian ladies. It is a kind of veil.

guine,

guine, and he placed no great reliance in the circumspection of the lady, whom the violence of her passion seemed to have entirely blinded. The least noise, the least rustling made him startle, his face would change color at every creaking of the door, and even the knocks at neighboring houses seemed to alarm him.

One night a loud rapping was heard at our door. The wire was pulled to open it, but nobody came. We both rose to listen, but could not hear the least noise for several minutes. The count impatiently took a candle, went again to the house-door, and holding his ear for some time to the key-hole, he opened it, went out, and at the distance of two or three yards, found a woman drest in white lying almost lifeless on the ground. He called me to his assistance. We took up the lady, her zendale was torn, and her dress in the utmost derangement. I held the light to her face, and we recognized the dutchess !

Having carried her into our parlor, it was a good while before she recovered her senses. Her voice was bewildered, and the first wish she expressed was to be brought home. We



promised to escort her, and conjuring her to be easy, requested she would give us an account of what had happened.

"Lose no time," said she all in a tremble, "to make the strictest search all over this house; for there must be some strangers in it." The count having rung all the servants to make the desired search, the dutchess thus continued her story:

—"It is more than half an hour ago, that I arrived in the canal before your door. But I could not leave my gondola; because two young men, in deep conversation, were standing before it. As far as I could see through darkness, they wore a kind of uniform, and spoke rather low in a foreign language, so that I could not understand a single word they said.

—"Having waited in vain several minutes for their going, and afraid lest I should lose too much time, I ventured to land and knock at your door. I pulled the wire and it opened. But that very moment, one of the young people forced in his way with me, threw me on the ground, gagged my mouth, dragged me out

out again, tore my veil, and while the other gently shut the door, beat me with his fists till I fainted. I was unable to cry out, and believe that the marks of their blows will for ever remain on my body."

Here she bared her arms and part of her neck, which were covered with livid bruises, contusions, and scratches. "I assure you," added she, "that there is no part of my body that has not felt the furious gripes of those merciless ruffians."

The count was distracted with sorrow and rage at this unfortunate adventure. He ran for his sword and wanted to sally forth into the streets, vowing destruction to the savage villains. The dutchess however prevented him, alledging, that she first wished herself safe home, and had not time to wait the result of his expedition, which he would have plenty of leisure to undertake and terminate after she should be gone.

My friend was obliged to comply, and we both saw the dutchess home, properly armed. We waited till she had entered the palace by the same private door through which she first

came. On our return we searched every part of the house from top to bottom, but with as little success as our servants had done before us.

The count began to think, that this incident would not as much prejudice him in the dutchess's affections, as serve to render her cautious for the future. And he well knew, that a woman that can coolly reflect on her passion, is already half-way of getting the better of it entirely. But no such disposition was in that lady's heart. She concealed her pain, applied plaisters to the wounded parts, and afterwards was more imprudent and rasher than ever. Impatient desire sparkled in her eyes, and had not illness prevented her husband, he could not but have perceived the change of her conduct.

The duke soon recovered, and was determined, before the commencement of the Lent season to give a brilliant fête to the count at his villa in the environs of Venice. Most of the nobles were invited, and the best musicians engaged.

Two



Two days before the intended fête, the count happened to fall out with the duke over a game at billiards in a coffee-house of the metropolis. The count left him abruptly, with a kind of challenge, and thinking his honor wounded resolved to come to an entire rupture with him. Returning home, my friend immediately acquainted me with what had happened, and very little was wanting for him to have also quarrelled with me. Seeing his countenance flushed with anger I could not help laughing at his complaints, and when he asked me why I did so, I replied, "you may thank Heaven for this occurrence. If you will be ruled by my advice, you will find it one of the happiest of your life."

I now communicated a plan to Selami, which after some hesitation he consented to adopt. That same hour we went to the duke, who feigned not to recollect the least part of what had happened ; I offered my mediation, effected a perfect reconciliation, and they both went immediately after to one of the principal taverns, to celebrate the restoration of their good understanding. The next morning the

duke set out to his villa, to give directions for finishing the preparations for the approaching fête.

I then went to inform the Inferior Council of the Republic, of the disagreement that had arisen between my friend and his grace. But I found somebody had got the start of me, and the information I gave, only corroborated the fact, and strengthened the general opinion of a duel being about to take place. Their reconciliation was a secret that had not transpired, and as the danger appeared very imminent the senators sent an order to the duke, to remain at his villa till farther notice, while the count as a foreigner, was obliged to give his parole not to leave the city in three days.

The whole went off wondrously well. The duke, almost bursting with rage, ruminated a long while in his mind, what could be the reason of this surprising mandate. He could not bear his honorable exile, disguised himself as a peasant at night, and returned to Venice. He did not wish immediately to go home, and loitered about several places

of

of public resort, to hear if he could not pick up some intelligence relative to his affair.

He was so fortunate as to find it the general topic of conversation almost wherever he went. He was just on the point of leaving the great square of St. Mark, when he was recognized by a young foreigner in French regiments, who accosted him, saying, "Your grace would do best to go home, as you will find Count Selami there." Here the foreigner hastily walked off, and left the duke quite astonished in the middle of the street:

"Count Selami?" said the duke to himself, "what can he want there when I am out of town? Strange, that a foreigner should give me this intelligence in so mysterious a manner! But more strange, that I am betrayed! It will be unsafe for me to remain much longer in the streets.—But the world loves scandal, and the count, who has no doubt heard of my misfortune, is in all likelihood gone to apprise my spouse of it. Somebody saw him enter the palace, and took it into his head to spread this injurious

report in some parts of the town. These reflections consoled him a little, but the sensations of jealousy and the fear of danger alternately struggled with his heart.

The count, who had actually given some superficial information to the dutchess of the real state of the affair, actually went in the evening to confirm it to her by his own presence. She received him like a woman, that has long panted for an opportunity of expressing to the darling of her heart the whole extent of her tenderness. They had never yet been able to converse so free and undisturbed together. They had a thousand plans to settle, a thousand measures to propose for facilitating their future meetings, and on the point of gratifying their wishes, a sudden and violent knocking was heard at the palace-gate. Suspecting, lest it should be the duke himself, the alarmed lovers quitted each others arms—the dutchess had ordered one of her women to be on the look-out, but she did not make her appearance. At last she came to inform her mistress, that she need not be alarmed, as the noise at the gate had only been a runaway

away-knock, given by some drunken or mischievous person who delighted in giving servants unnecessary trouble.

This report gave fresh courage to the gallant couple, who no sooner began to indulge themselves in new acts of dalliance, than they were a second time alarmed by the most thundering raps, which continued with redoubled force.

In less than a second after, the chamber-maid ran into the apartment almost out of breath, to inform her mistress, that she believed, the person who knocked last, was the duke himself in the disguise of a peasant. Meanwhile the gate was opened to him. Nobody can conceive the unspeakable embarrassment which the loving pair felt on this occasion. An escape was impracticable, and had the dutchess even been able to hide the count, it was not less certain, that her spouse, had he had the smallest suspicion, would have searched every corner, and a discovery might probably have cost the life of both. They resolved therefore to urge the same excuse, which the duke's ingenuity had already suggested to himself in

favor of his friend. The chess-board being placed before the sopha on which the dutchess was sitting, the count hastily took place in a chair facing her, and both shammed to be quite absorbed in the depth of gambling.

This was by far the best expedient they could recur to. The dutchess burst out in a loud laugh respecting this clever contrivance to extricate themselves from the awkward predicament in which they stood. The count imitated her mirth, loudly exclaiming, "What a strange position of the game!" when the duke just entered the apartment, and perfectly caught the illusion.

Neither of them in their affected attention to the game feigned to perceive his entrance. The dutchess now made a move, and I cried out, "Bravo! a masterly move!" The duke beckoned his spouse who now seemed to have perceived him to be quiet, and stole on his toes behind the count's chair to overlook his play. The latter, who at the alarm of his grace's arrival had had presence of mind enough to put on his sword, sat gravely meditating how to retrieve the fortune of the game,

game, which was supposed to go against him. After a moment's pause, which could not give the husband time to perceive the whole sham of the contrivance, he swept off all the men with his hand, exclaiming, "Madam, I have lost!" The dutchess then feigned to start up at the sight of her lord, and hastening to embrace him, overturned the table, candles and all.—The count jumped up with an air of sudden surprise, while the lady cried, "A fine trick monsignor duke! How can you thus frighten me?"

—“Madam,” replied the unsuspecting husband, “I wished to give you unexpected joy?”

—“I shall not thank you, monsignor, you have spoiled the count's good luck.”

—“It was not my intention. I rather came to extricate him.”

The count now embraced his friend with great demonstrations of gladness at seeing him again. They remained together an hour longer, to arrange measures for adjusting their affair. The count insisted on the duke's returning to his villa, and even accompanied him part of the way. On his return to Ve-

nice the morning began to appear, and he thought it best to betake himself to rest, as he dreaded the worst consequences from a second visit to the dutchess.

What confirmed him in those apprehensions was the account which the duke had given him on the road, relative to what had happened in the great square of St. Mark.

The count reflected on the circumstance of its being a person in the regimentals of an officer who gave the duke information at his being at the palace, and concluded that it must have been one of the same who so unmercifully beat the dutchess some weeks before. He also began to imagine, that it must be the same person who gave the first alarm by a runaway-knock. He never heard, that the lady had any other lover, yet such a thing was very possible.

The next day the proceedings against the two reconciled friends were quashed by the interference of the duke's powerful friends, and the fête at the villa was celebrated with the most pompous splendor.

The

The duke, the dutchess, my friend and I, agreed to go to a masquerade on Shrove-Tuesday, which was the last entertainment to be given before the commencement of Lent. The two lovers previously projected a plan to profit by the throng occasioned by the great number of masks, to give the duke the slip, in order to accomplish their long impeded happiness.

It was resolved, that all four of us should go together. The count who swore he would not leave the duke, proposed to me at the request of the latter, to escort the dutchess the whole night as her cavalier or *cicisbeo*. I declined this honor, declaring myself wholly inadequate to the trust. The duke laughed at my modest diffidence, and the custom of the country absolutely requiring a cavalier to attend his spouse, he insisted on the count's accepting of the flattering office. It was farther settled between us, that the count and the dutchess should wear the disguise of a shepherd and shepherdess. The duke chose the costume of an harlequin, and I appeared,

I appeared, as I generally did, in a black domino.

We arrived in the ball-room, and found it uncommonly crowded. We had not gone many yards, when our friend harlequin got himself hemmed in by some masks. We had put a red silken patch on his hat, unknown to him, that we might be the better able to recognize him. He was so little and weak, as to find it impossible, for some time, to get out of the crowd. The count and the dutchess, agreeable to their scheme, walked up and down the room for a few minutes, and then retired to a distant chamber of the ball-house, to change their dress. A carriage was waiting at the door, to convey them to a snug private house out of the neighborhood.

The count had given orders to his valet, who was much like himself in size, to appear with a girl, that bore some outward resemblance to the dutchess, in the same shepherd's dress, which he and his lady wore, and not to lose sight of the harlequin, whom he taught them to recognize by the patch of red

red silk on his hat. This valet was remarkable for his cunning and acuteness, and having agreed among ourselves, not to speak but by signs, he immediately made an excellent substitute for the intriguing couple. But harlequin who began to be tired of being squeezed and pushed about, made an hundred signs to his supposed spouse to retire. The latter from want of recollection, answered his geslures by all sorts of random signals, which the duke was utterly at a loss to understand. Provoked at her stubbornness he finally retired to another room, and left the shepherd and shepherdes to themselves.

Common and insignificant as my own disguise was, I got nevertheless soon surrounded by several persons, who wanted to enter into conversation with me, and endeavored to part me from my friend and the dutches, while they still continued in the room. At last a mask also wearing a black domino, addressed me in Spanish, saying, "How do you like the Venetian ladies, Don Carlos?" — I made no answer, and so well forced my way

way through the insidious group as not to lose sight of the two lovers till I knew them in perfect safety.

I then returned to the bustling crowd, when I was again accosted by a mask, that whispered in my ear, "Marquis, your friend is in danger. The duke misses his lady. There's not a moment to be lost."

I stood for some time in motionless amazement. Our harlequin, whom I distinguished by the patch, now run quite furious through the room, beckoning and staring at every person. I laid hold of him by the sleeve, asking what could be the matter? He answered by a pantomimic gesture, expressing the motion of stabbing me with a dagger, impetuously broke loose from me, and strutted quite in a rage.

I thought it high time to inform Selami of this strange occurrence. I hastened to the room in which he had unmasked himself, and met him down stairs, just on the point of stepping into the carriage with his lady. I told him all, and it was unanimously resolved to return to the room, in order to make a proper enquiry into the matter. We there found

found the harlequin as boisterous as before. "Let us avoid him," said the dutchess, and retire to another apartment."

In our retreat, the count perceived a cross marked with chalk on my domino, which had probably been made at my entrance to distinguish me. He rubbed it off. We went into one of the gaming-rooms, and to our great surprise, found our harlequin sitting there with great composure at a pharos-table.

To be sure of his being the identical man we wanted, we gave him several of the signs agreed upon. He immediately rose, knew and so closely followed us, that we could not get rid of him for a moment all the remainder of the night.

C H A P. XIV.

ON our return home we could not help taking these singular occurrences into the most serious consideration. We found all our plans frustrated one after another, and remarked

remarked that they were rendered abortive by others far more ingenious and better executed. Heaven knew, what interest our opponents could feel! The dutchess most solemnly protested, she had never given the duke a right of being jealous of her, nor had she ever had an opportunity for it.

But who could be those opponents? Was it some new genius, a second Amanuel? Was it a set of emissaries of the monstrous Cabal? I did not know how to reconcile these thoughts with the invisible influence of my mystic brethren, which had ceased to distress me ever since Bernardos's tragical and deserved exit.

The appearance of the two foreigners, dressed in regimentals, one of whom had spoken to me in good Spanish, made me after all inclined to think, that the relentless covenant was again exerting its secret and invisible powers to prepare for me new catastrophes.

The duke now became daily more reserved towards me and my friend. The dutchess was aware of it, and seemed to despair. Her

husband

husband even shewed coldness in his conduct to herself, and unable either to advise or relieve the count, she consoled him with the future, and promised to let no opportunity pass, without thinking of their mutual interest, and promoting it by her best endeavours.

An incident however soon happened, which entirely destroyed the harmony between them. The count loved the ladies rather from a propensity to their sprightly and agreeable conversation, than from any natural inducement of his temper. He visited them in every station, and now condescended to frequent the haunts of the very outcast of their sex. He principally attached himself to an intercourse with a beautiful Grecian courtesan, of the name of Chlorinda, whose wit and ingenuity were very attractive. This lady did not bestow her favors indiscriminately, but partially reserved them for a select few.

Among these the count was one. We sometimes went to spend the evening at Chlorinda's house. She then dismissed the rest of her

her suitors by pretending absence from home, and entirely devoted herself to our own entertainment.

One evening, which we had agreed to spend at Chlorinda's, the count went out on business, and requested me to go first to her house, where he promised to join me. I was deeply engaged in conversation with the lady, when her servant announced the Dutchess de F**. I was overwhelmed with surprise at this unexpected meeting, and begged of Chlorinda to permit me to hide myself in her alcove which opened with glass doors. I went in and took place behind the curtains of the door, of which I lifted one end to peep through the glass, that I might have a clear view of what passed in the room. I felt the greatest apprehensions for the count at this unlucky moment, as he had every thing to dread from the vindictive rage of a jealous and deluded Italian.

The dutchess entered with all the pride and pomposness of her rank, curiously casting her eyes about the room. Chlorinda received her with graceful ease, and asked, what could have

have procured her the honor of so distinguished a visit? " Your extensive fame, Signora," replied the former. " I came to convince myself, if your charms were really so irresistible, and your manners so prepossessing as they are reported. Excuse my injustice; for you know that we women are very unbelieving in such like matters."

Chlorinda was never at a loss for an answer, and found it easy to insinuate herself with every one. The dutchess who had only sought a pretence, declared herself so much flattered with the lady's spirit and accomplishments, as to be under the necessity of asking her permission to sup with her that night. So saying, she made no farther ado, than to sit down with great familiarity and composure on the sopha.

Chlorinda begged leave to decline so much honor, as she expected some strangers, who wished to see her without company. The dutchess blushed at this answer, but added, that she must patiently bear her intrusion, as she was determined, at all events, to stay with her. Had Chlorinda had the most distant idea

idea of the count's connexion with the dutchess, her subtle mind would doubtless have furnished her with some means or other to get rid of her troublesome visitor. But she now thought that my friend, so far from being displeased, would rejoice at the opportunity of finding another handsome woman of the party and at her table.

I did not know what to do to get out of my hiding-place. The windows of the alcove being shut, locked and barred, it was impossible to make my escape without alarming the ladies in the outer apartment, nor was there any other outlet or door from it through which I might have got out, to meet the count, and intercept him on his passage. Nothing could be more certain than that her grace had obtained information of the footing on which he lived with Chlorinda, and she was purposely come to convince herself of it. I was not less certain, that should he be discovered she would set all the engines of female vengeance at work to punish his infidelity. I resolved, therefore, to try every thing before such a discovery could take place,

place, and seizing a large tumbler of water which stood on Chlorinda's night-stand, I dashed it with loud force on the floor.

Chlorinda understood the meaning of this signal. But despairing of getting rid of her guest, she rung the servant and bid him go into the alcove and see if her lap-dog had done no mischief. She would have gone herself, but was afraid lest the dutchess should follow her step by step.

The servant came to me with a lighted candle, when pressing some gold into his hand, I requested him in a low tone of voice, to hasten to the door of the house, and should Count Selami come, to desire him on my part, for his life, to go home immediately. The servant now took with him the little lap-dog which actually laid on Chlorinda's bed and was fast asleep, and turning him into the other apartment, said, "Signora, little Franciulla has broken a porcelain bason and stand!"

At these words, our ill fate decreed, that the count should bounce into the room, foot-ing a cotillion step, whistling a favorite tune, and in as high spirits as I ever saw him in my life.

life. He cheerfully advanced to Chlorinda, and then turned round with an intention to salute the other lady, whom his eagerness had not yet permitted him to notice.

A thunder-clap that drops from a clear and serene sky, could not have more suddenly overwhelmed him than this unexpected view. He reeled back into a chair, and fainted with surprize. Chlorinda rose to give him her assistance, but the dutchess kept her back, crying, "Let the wretch perish!"

—“Barbarous woman!” answered Chlorinda, who got from the dutchess, and rung her people for help. At this time I also left the alcove, and hastened to my friend. “You too, marquis!” exclaimed the dutchess, with Cæsar’s words.

As soon as the count was a little better, her grace rose from the sopha, and with an enraged countenance, and a scornful look, quitted the house without saying a word more. The count was, for some time, quite distract-ed, and began to long for his country, where he hoped to find his Caroline reclaimed from error, and restored to her health. It had indeed

deed been rashness in the extreme to have staid much longer at Venice, where the ceaseless resentment of the dutches put us almost hourly in the most imminent danger of losing our lives.

It seemed inconceivable to us, by what means the dutches came to know the count's intercourse with Chlorinda. And the bold and resolute manner in which she persisted to wait his arrival, shewed something more than the mere effect of public rumor. It even indicated the certainty in which she was, of meeting her changling there. We both had reason to suppose, that the two young men in regimentals were again at the bottom of the secret.

Our persecutors were little disposed to leave us at rest. The dutches did nothing but breathe schemes of vengeance. The duke, who thought to have new and convincing proofs of her connexion with the count, and had reason to spare her on account of certain family matters, only meditated blood and murder, to punish the temerity of his former friend. Not a day passed without our receiv-

ing anonymous letters, representing our danger, and some of the servants reported, that every night certain persons deeply muffled up, were lingering about the house to watch our motions. We went out well armed every day, and returned home at twilight, avoiding all narrow passes and lanes.

One night, the weather being uncommonly beautiful and serene, we resolved to stay some hours longer than we were wont to do at a coffee-house on St. Mark's Square, and ordered some sherbet to be brought us before the door. Owing to the great number of guests, we were obliged to wait a good while before we could get served. At last the waiter forced his way with some difficulty through the crowd, and brought us the desired liquor, with some ices on a dish. Just as he was going to present it, a person in a green cloak, with his hat deeply slouched over his face hustled the waiter, apparently without design, and made him drop the ices and spill the liquor, which fell on the ground.

The

The count fancied, that this trick had been played us on purpose. He attempted to rise and attack the stranger, when I forcibly detained him, whispering into his ear, "Remember we are in Venice, and surrounded with dangers!"

He had lately purchased a beautiful Italian pointer, whom he took out with him wherever he went. This animal, which was lying at his feet, got up to lick some of the liquor from the pavement. The Count, who was in a passion, kicked the poor beast, and rose, alledging, that it was very late and high time to be gone.

I followed him, but he was thirsty, and stopt at another coffee-house by the way to drink lemonade. The house being but thin of company, we tarried a little, when his dog began to make several strange leaps, foamed from the mouth, and shortly after dropt down dead. The Count who was very fond of the animal, was sadly vexed, and threw him into a canal. "It was strong poison, Marquis," said he. "Very strong!" replied I, wrapping myself up shuddering in my cloak.

When we arrived on the bridge of St. Siovanni, which was very near our house, we heard a loud whistling before and behind us. There was no moonshine, but it was still light enough to enable us to perceive three muffled men advance against us, from the farther end of the bridge. Not a soul else was to be seen either in the streets or on the canals. We perceived the danger in good time, and drew our swords to defend ourselves. The three men crept on slowly, and at the distance of three or four yards from us, began to utter their death-howl, "*Morte! morte!*" and darted upon us with their long battle-swords. We put ourselves in position against the rails of the bridge; I threw my cloak at the first ruffian that assailed us, and had the good fortune to run him through, while he was endeavouring to disentangle himself. The second bravo, as soon as he saw the danger of his comrade attacked me with incredible fury, his sword wounded me in the shoulder, but I caught it that same instant with my hands, when he wrested it from me with such force as to cut my palm and fingers in several places.

The

The combat became now more equal, and while my friend was engaged with the third cut-throat, I continued the conflict with the second with unspeakable fury. At last two others came from behind us, and we thought ourselves irreparably lost, when to our astonishment, the latter bid us be of good cheer, and engaged our enemies, who after some desperate passes, by which one of our deliverers fell wounded to the ground, took to their heels, and fled with the utmost precipitation. We let them fly unpursued, and pulling off the crape which covered the face of my slain antagonist, I discovered Jago! We flew to embrace our generous deliverers, who were drest in regimentals, and seemed to be the same described by the dutchess and her husband. We returned them a thousand thanks, but they made no answer. I laid hold of the corpse of Jago, and by their and my friend's assistance carried it to our house, which was not quite twenty or thirty yards from the place of combat. I eagerly identified him at the light of candles, and searching his pockets found nothing but a purse in them. The

wound in my shoulder gave me great pain, and a surgeon being sent for, it was dressed, after that which one of our deliverers had received. The latter's wound was thought dangerous, and his companion stood pensive and in mute sorrow by his side. The count would not leave him an instant, and methought I knew their faces, though they were quite covered with a white cosmetic paint. At last the patient cried with a soft voice, "The moment of discovery is come! I die happy! I have saved you!" At these words he put his handkerchief to his face to wipe off the paint, I flew to his assistance and that instant recognized and embraced Adela—my poor Adela! This was the signal at which the other clasped the count to his arms, and—O wonder!—it was Caroline!

This almost miraculous meeting nearly deprived us of our senses, and long we continued in silent extacy. What a torrent of painful and delicious sensations did not now overwhelm our hearts! Could one think it within the reach of possibilities, that human nature were able to stand so keen, so awful a shock?

shock?—Ah! that the powers of language should not be competent to paint this interesting scene! I turn despondent from the baffling task, and leave it to the man of sensibility! Ah! sensibility! sensibility! Thy yearning throbs alone can express the grand and sublime shades of this more than magic picture!

C H A P. XV.

WE were now disagreeably roused from our trance, by a violent knocking at the door and the cry of, "Open! open! in the name of the Serene Republic!" I staggered forth to obey the call, and had no sooner with a tremulous motion, pulled back the spring of the lock, than an officer with the surgeon and a strong detachment of soldiers entered the house. The surgeon, by virtue of his oath, had gone to the pretor of the senate to report the matter, and the vigilant magistrate had given orders to the armed force to immediately bring the parties before

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him.

him. After a short explanation, and the surgeon's representing it as dangerous to remove Adela, the commanding officer not only consented to her staying behind, but even had the politeness to permit Caroline to keep her company. As a measure of safety he, however, made a serjeant's guard remain in the house till our return. In similar cases justice is so strictly administered at Venice, that the magistrates will not only consecrate the day, but even the night to the exercise of their functions. The pretor, who was owner of the house we rented, and to whom we had been strongly recommended by one of the first senators of the republic, as men of quality, heard our story with great attention, and was so far satisfied, as to dismiss us on condition of giving our word of honor to make our appearance as soon as we should be called upon again. To this we readily submitted, and thanking him for the confidence which he was pleased to repose in us, we returned home under a proper safe-guard. The body of Jago was left at a neighbouring bone-house

to

to be owned, but much to our surprise the account of the business which appeared in public the next day, was so black, that nobody claimed the deceased except his landlord, who represented him as a stranger, of whom he knew nothing, but that he stood indebted to him for the hire of some apartments he had occupied for about a fortnight. The purse of gold was left in the pocket of the deceased, so that not the least suspicion of crime could fall upon us. His lodgings, we understand, were opened and searched the next day, and nothing found in them except a few clothes. On our arrival at home, the officer withdrew the guard. Adela and Caroline were transported with joy at the favorable issue of the affair, which, considering that we were foreigners, might naturally have induced the magistrate to detain us in custody till farther enquiries should have been made to clear up so serious a case.

"Thanks to Providence, Don Carlos!" exclaimed Adela, "that thy repentant wife has atoned for her wrongs by saving thy life and that of thy friend, and by having become

the chief instrument of the destruction of thy most cruel enemies in Spain,—of those whose dangerous intercourse has corrupted my innocence, and deprived us of our happiness! Thanks to Providence, which has chosen me thy second Genius, to snatch thee from perdition; I am afraid, I shall not live to enjoy the fruits of my dutiful endeavors, but the act itself is a sufficient reward, and I shall die contented if I survive in thy remembrance.

"It is my duty to relate to you the causes which brought me to this foreign country, and the circumstances which have guided my conduct in doing what has been accomplished. Your thanks are equally due to Caroline, who has accompanied me every where in this dangerous enterprise, impelled by the same motives in favor of the Count, her husband, whose generosity will no doubt reward her fortitude and more than female tenderness, love, and affection."

Here the count and I vowed, with tears in our eyes, never to part from them more. I knelt down by my Adela's side, covering her hand with kisses, while Count Selami loaded

loaded his Caroline with numberless acts of blandishment.

"A few weeks," continued Adela, "after you had sent us notice of your departure for Venice, a stranger came to the convent, and demanded admittance to the parlor, alledging that she had a letter of the utmost importance to deliver to me. Her request was granted and she put the following epistle into my hands:

"Madam,

"SINCE the death of Bernardos, which the
"Covenant you belong to is resolved to
"avenge, I have been informed by a friend
"of the place of your retreat at Seville. My
"respect for your husband, whom I once
"loved, makes me forget the injury he has
"done me, and I now put it in your power
"to save his life and that of Count Selami,
"his friend, whose spouse, I understand, also
"shares your fate.

"Don Carlos is gone to Venice, and next
"week, three members of the Cabal will set
"out for the same place charged with the

" execution of the horrid plan of murdering
" both him and his friend, at the first favora-
" ble opportunity. My advice is, that you
" do without delay set out to frustrate the
" black deed. To convince you of the sin-
" cerity of this communication, I will meet
" you next Tuesday at Alcantara, to point
" out the monsters who are to exterminate
" Don Carlos. As none of them knows you
" or was present at the time of your recep-
" tion into the Mystic Society, you will soon
" remark their persons. They are indeed,
" very remarkable, and since, after having
" once seen them, you will easily know them
" again, you will please to stay with me for
" some time longer, to receive such farther
" instructions as I shall then give you for the
" deserved punishment of your worst enemies
" and mine own. This done, you will have
" time enough to get the start of the emis-
" faries, who have orders to stop at different
" places on the road.

" I shall therefore personally expect you,
" madam, at your own town-house at Alcan-
" tara on Tuesday next, by five o'clock in the
" afternoon,

" afternoon, and am with frankness and friend-
ship, yours, &c.

" ROSALIA DES BUENOS."

" Alcantara, Dec. 12.

—" Good Heavens!" cried I with amaze-
ment, "is it possible, that the very woman,
who has been represented to me as my death-
fiend, and on whose affections I trampled,
should thus magnanimously serve her undoer?"

—" Yes, my lord," resumed Adela, "it is
to her more than to myself, you stand indebt-
ed for your life. What follows will farther
confirm the truth of my assertion.

" I showed Rosalia's letter to Caroline, by
whose advice its contents were likewise com-
municated to the abbess. This lady whose
esteem of you always manifested itself by the
tender and indulgent treatment of your un-
happy spouse, was quite charmed with my re-
solution to join you with Caroline. So we
quitted the convent, and arrived at Alcantara
two days previous to the appointment made
by my generous informant.

" Rosalia

" Rosalia was punctual to the minute, and we received her with transports of joy and gratitude. The amiable creature was so ingenuous as to confess to us her former frailties, and the reasons that had made her break the tyrannic shackles of the odious Cabal. Its infidious councils were again swayed by your enemies, and all those who were friendly to the principles of your uncle, had withdrawn from it. She was present at the meeting of the society, in which it was resolved to send out emissaries to Italy to assassinate you and your friend.

" This atrocious project gave the last shock to poor Rosalia's outraged humanity. She now represented to me, in the most forcible manner, the necessity of my going to the governor of Alcantara to give information to have them secured at their next nightly conventicle, which she knew was to be holden in the night between the fifteenth and sixteenth of the same month. It was her opinion, that the seizure of their persons or papers would be of the last importance to the general interest of the State, and she promised to give
all

all the assistance in her power to effect that salutary end.

" I vowed the strictest obedience to her orders. After dinner she went out with us to shew us the inn, where Jago and the two other emissaries of the Cabal were to arrive in the evening to set out for Italy, charged with the execution of the terrible plan, early on the ensuing morning. And so faithful a description did she give of their shape, figure, and dress, as to render any mistake on my part utterly impossible.

" After our return, we prevailed on Rosalia to make our house her own, till the final accomplishment of our enterprize, or as much longer as she pleased. In the evening Caroline and I, in the disguise of French officers, went again to the inn. About nine o'clock, Jago and his ruffian companions arrived in a travelling chaise, whom we recognized without the least difficulty. We ordered supper in an apartment adjoining to that which they occupied. The doors of each room being left open, we had an opportunity of overhearing the greater part of their discourse, in which they

they much enlarged on the manner they wished to perform the journey, not forgetting to mention three frontier towns, where it was their intention to stop for some days. We slept that whole night at the inn, and about seven o'clock in the morning had the satisfaction to take tea and chocolate with the ruffians. The conversation chiefly ran on the pleasures of travelling, and as they made no scruple to inform us they were going to the carnival of Venice, we apprised them, that it was likewise our intention to be present at that celebrated amusement, and that we would have been happy in joining such excellent company, were we not forced to stay some days longer at Alcantara to wait for remittances.

" Jago replied, that he and his friends were highly sensible of the honor we meant to confer upon them, and they hoped to have the pleasure of meeting us in good time to share with them the festivities of the season. Having done breakfast, they politely took leave of us, and drove away. I forgot to state, that the better to elude all kind of suspicion,

spicion, we took care to pass for two Basque officers, belonging to a foreign regiment in the French service, who, owing to the revolutionary broils, had left France to make the tour of Spain and Italy, till the expected reduction of the democratic principles, which most of the kings of Europe were so busily employed with eradicating, should occasion our recal with the rest of the fugitives who left that country.

" Satisfied with this preliminary success, we returned to our house and gave a scrupulous account to Rosalia of all which had passed. By her directions, I paid a visit to the Governor of Alcantara, in the morning of the fifteenth of December, to whom I unravelled all I knew or had heard of the dangerous principles of the Cabal. His excellency having given me his word to observe the profoundest secrecy respecting the disclosure of so momentous an affair, invited Caroline, Rosalia and me to sup with him that evening, when Rosalia gave him all such farther information as it was not in my power to grant. The governor then acquainted us with the measures

sures he had taken for surprising the abominable miscreants in their den. About ten o'clock the drum beat to arms, and two hundred grenadiers and sixty troopers, according to the orders previously received collected on the parade facing his excellency's residence. A quarter of an hour after, the governor, Rosalia, Caroline and I, marched this corps out of the city, whence with lighted torches, and guided by Rosalia, we penetrated into the antic forest, towards the antic castle. Arrived on the spot, the troops immediately occupied all the passes and avenues to and from the ruinous mansion, so that it was impossible for any of the mystic barbarians to escape. It could then be about three o'clock in the morning of the sixteenth, and the Covenant was supposed to have sat not much longer than an hour. A detachment of twenty grenadiers, with fixed bayonets, were now picked out to force their way through the corridor, but they found the iron-gate, at the distance of a few yards from the anti-chamber of the saloon, shut up. Attempting to force it open, the monsters from within took the alarm, and perceiving

perceiving the troops, who peremptorily demanded admittance, they declared their readiness to defend themselves to the last extremity, and rather than surrender, to bury themselves in the ruins of the place. The grenadiers, exasperated at this refusal, fired a volley of musquetry, which levelled with the dust several of their opponents. These, grown more obstinate by the height of the danger, so far from being inactive returned the firing by a smart discharge of blunderbusses, carabines and pistols, which were probably kept in the castle for the purpose of defence. The governor now ordered the detachment to fall back from the corridor on the main body, and drafting a number of volunteers, made the necessary preparations for taking the den by storm. Already the forlorn hope was proceeding to the assault, when—shocking to relate! —the dark cavern blew up with its desperate tenants, strewing the ground with mangled limbs and carcasses, and smoking ruins. When day-light came the most awful scene of devastation presented itself to our view, but what grieved me most and will no doubt grieve you all—was, the unhappy end of the amiable

Rosalia,

Rosalia, who was blown up with fifteen grenadiers at the entrance of the corridor!"

Here I uttered a scream, and raved with wild fury. I felt my heart almost rent at the melancholy tidings of the death of my fair preserver, and it was a full hour before Adela, the count and Caroline could, by their joint efforts, alleviate my frantic grief so far as to enable the former to resume her narrative, which my lamentations had quite interrupted. Seeing me a little more composed, she thus continued :

" Just and grateful, my dear Carlos, is the sorrow you testify at poor Rosalia's death, but moderate your emotions, and remember that it is not ours to stop the course of mortal destiny. No intreaty, no remonstrance could check her zeal on that memorable day, so fatal to her, and yet so glorious and beneficial for you. Even the governor's frowns could not have prevented her from sacrificing her blooming existence at the mouth of that hellish cavern. The explosion also swept away several of the soldiers from without, and forty more including the governor

and

and a subaltern were wounded. The ministry well satisfied with this exploit, voted their thanks to his excellency, and the force under his command in the most honorable and flattering terms. And I have good reason to believe, that, comprising Jago, all your cruel enemies are cut off, except the two nefarious companions of the former, who escaped our vengeance by flight. The hateful dungeon of our sorrows is made even with the ground, and a military station has replaced the ruined pile, to prevent other traitors from assembling on its warning level.

" On our arrival at Venice, we, at first, found some difficulty to discover the place of your abode, but on making application to the police-office to inspect the list containing the names of all the foreigners recently arrived, we not only saw in it those of the Marquis de Grandez and Count Selami, but also of Don Jago de Proveros, Spanish noblemen. We paid a visit to the latter, who seemed highly pleased at seeing us again. I immediately employed several bravos to watch all his movements and those of his companions. I
also

also had the good fortune to devote to our interest Jago's interpreter, a native of France, who had formerly been in my father's service at Montpellier. It was he, who afforded me the most essential aid in the prevention of the murder.

" I must confess, that Caroline and I were not a little chagrined, at observing in our disguise, the levities of your conduct. But you will pardon us, if we check so often the progress of those gallantries and intrigues, which your sex presumes to have an exclusive right to punish in frail woman, while they deem themselves above the duties of reciprocity. It was I who spilt the poisoned liquor, which the bravoes of the dutchesse de F** had found means to infuse into the bowl at the coffee-house. One of these bravoes was at the same time in our pay, and for 500 zechins he betrayed the trust reposed in him by his first vindictive employer. Still a thousand dangers threaten you on the part of that irritated vindictive woman, and they will haunt you wherever you go, unless we speedily quit Venice. But—"

Here

Here Adela, debilitated by the loss of blood, and exhausted of strength by the length of this account, fell into a long swoon, and passed the remainder of the night rather quietly.

In his morning visit the surgeon informed me, that all danger was over, and gave me hopes of Adela's speedy and entire recovery.

To my unspeakable joy this wished-for event took place in less than a fortnight after, when we returned with my friend and Caroline to Spain.

It is worthy of remark, that a few days previous to our departure from the capital of the Venetian commonwealth, we received notice from the pretor to appear at the senate-house, in order to give evidence against the two other emissaries of the Cabal who, owing to the restless vigilance of our bravoes, were seized at Verona, whither they had fled immediately after the failure of their murderous design. They were convicted of the heinous charge and condemned to wear the chains

chains of rowing galley-slaves on board the ships of that republic for the space of twelve years.

Thus, after the most perplexing incidents, and by the generous efforts of a misguided wife and a duped mistress, have I triumphed at last over the most implacable enemies! Thus, after numberless youthful follies and excesses have I found the harbor of peace amidst the terrible storms of an unsettled and buffeting fate! Long may it continue—the happy calm!—May the life of all the gay and impassioned only so far resemble mine, as to make the bitters of dear-bought experience contribute to an ultimate happiness, that shall need no witness to attest its perfection!

F I N I S.

